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THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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EDITORIAL

Transmitting a Culture

Much has been spoken and written about the greatness of Icelandic culture and the urgent need to preserve it from fading into everlasting obscurity. There are many who earnestly believe that the possibility of the world losing this great cultural asset is a stark reality.

In an attempt to allay such fears I am tempted to remind the reader that true greatness is never really lost. I am firmly convinced that if a culture has a worthwhile contribution to offer civilization, that contribution will ultimately flow naturally into the life stream of nations as they progress towards higher ideals and a greater realization of aesthetics. It follows then that what a culture may have to offer the world often lies dormant until such time that it is revived through the burning inspirations of later scholars.

History supplies the most illuminating illustration of this remarkable awakening to past cultures in the "Renaissance", or as it is more popularly known, "The Revival of Learning". There the culture of the great civilizations of Greece and Rome were revived through the efforts of earnest scholars with open minds, anxious to glean the good from the preserved literature and art of distant ages. Those great cultures of the past were not lost to us. In fact they became the main thread in the web of western civilizations to follow.

In the light of these revelations, why are there frequent fears demonstrated concerning the possibility of losing our Icelandic culture? Certainly as long as there is an Iceland her culture will

remain. What we are really deploring when we express these fears, is the fact that people of Icelandic descent in countries other than Iceland, are fast losing contact with the remarkable heritage of Icelandic literature. In this respect, I find that far too often those who earnestly believe themselves to be strong supporters of keeping this heritage well guarded by trying to prolong its original form, are often its greatest enemies. They fail to realize that its cultural values must be transmitted to the mind and that the original medium of transmission is lacking for the vast majority of people of Icelandic descent living in foreign lands. The available means of transmission is necessarily the language which the individual has adopted of which is his native language by reason of his birth in another land.

Aesthetics is, "the science of the beautiful and how to express it". That Icelandic literature is beautiful and that it has a delightful expression in its own no well-informed person will deny. However we must keep in mind that it must be translated into a medium that the Icelandic Canadian or, indeed, any other interested reader is capable of absorbing before he is able to avail himself of its cultural values. Many offer the argument that in other than its original form, Icelandic literature loses much of its better qualities. Without doubt the argument is founded on fact. However "half a pie" is better than none. Are love, hate, joy or sorrow confined within the bounds of language?

In the light of these inferences it is not the duty of all Icelandic Can-

adians to make a concerted effort to conserve Icelandic culture and customs by circulating their cultural contributions through the medium of the English language and thus gain contact with the majority rather than stubbornly attempt to prolong its original form and thus reach only an ever diminishing minority? In Canada, certainly the future will provide fewer and fewer personalities with a thorough enough mastery of the Icelandic language to truly benefit from any major editions here in Icelandic. The subject matter of such editions is even now within the reach of only a select few who have been fortunate enough to retain a complete understanding of their original tongue. These editions no doubt have much to offer all Icelandic Canadians and the greater part of their contents, if translated, could become available to them in their chosen or what is now their native

tongue. This could also be the vital link in their association with the remarkable heritage that those of Icelandic descent wish to preserve. So also, should we not be anxious to share Icelandic literature, or, for that matter any accomplishments, with our fellow countrymen? Certainly it should not remain bottled up within the confines of the Icelandic language but rather should flow freely as a fountain of inspiration for all mankind.

No worthy literature has been subjected to a wider field of translations than the Holy Bible. The translations have not lessened the power of the Word of God. On the contrary they have spread the high ideals of Christian living to the four corners of the earth. The great Icelandic heritage can likewise be shared throughout the world through the medium of translations.

A. Isfeld

Withdrawals From the Magazine Staff

In the case of a staff of twelve serving on a voluntary basis on the Magazine Committee there are bound to be changes in personnel from time to time. The Icelandic Canadian regrets two withdrawals at this time.

Dr. Áskell Löve

It is with feelings of both pleasure and regret that we announce the departure from Winnipeg of Dr. Áskell Löve and his consequent enforced withdrawal from the Editorial Board.

Dr. Áskell Löve joined the Editorial Board in May 1952 and during the last four years has been a valuable contributor to discussions on the policy of the magazine and the purpose it seeks to serve. Learned and well composed articles have appeared in the magazine from his pen which have

given some indication of the thorough knowledge Dr. Löve has of the branch of Botany in which he has specialized. This little diversion from his duties at the University of Manitoba has not prevented him from giving of his time to research work and writing articles in scientific journals. Neither the writer nor most of the readers of this magazine would glean much from scientific treatises under the following headings: Cytotaxinomial Evaluation of Corresponding Taxa, by Áskell Löve, published at The Hague in 1954; Fruiting Bryoxiphium Madeirense, by Áskell Löve and Doris Löve, reprinted from The Bryologist, 1955, etc. But the writer can say this which all will understand and be glad to hear: the late Dr. A. H. S. Gillson told him that when applications were being received

for the particular position in the Department of Botany Dr. Löve's qualifications were far above those of any of the other applicants.

This superiority has received due recognition. A short time ago Dr. Löve was appointed to the staff of the University of Montreal and will devote his time almost exclusively to research work. It is gratifying also to know that Mrs. Löve's training and experience have been equally recognized. Both of them have been appointed Research Professors in Biosystematics at the University of Montreal.

The Icelandic Canadian extends congratulations to Doctors Askell and Doris Löve and expresses the hope that it will receive compensation for the loss it has suffered in the form of articles or even letters from either of them.

Jon K. Laxdal

Jon K. Laxdal joined the staff of The Icelandic Canadian in June, 1949, and, after seven years of faithful and constructive work on the Board, feels compelled to withdraw—at least for the time being. His decision to do so was not, as in the case of Dr. Löve, forced because of a promotion but it was brought about through the recognition of his very valuable services as Assistant Principal of the Provincial Normal School of Manitoba. At present the school has an enrollment of about six hundred students per year of whom about four hundred are in residence. This, it is understood, is the only resident Normal School in Canada.

The Provincial Normal School is located in Tuxedo and is about seven miles from the heart of the City of Winnipeg. Since his appointment Jon Laxdal has commuted between his home at 39 Home St., Winnipeg, and the Normal School—a very consider-

able burden added to his many responsible duties at the School. The Department of Education has for some time been anxious to have Mr. Laxdal reside on the Normal School grounds and the Province of Manitoba is building a residence for Mr. Laxdal this summer and he will be moving out before the opening of the Fall Term. That of necessity will make it difficult for him to carry on his many activities in the city and he felt that he had to relinquish his official connection with the staff of The Icelandic Canadian. He however, did add that he would be willing to contribute to the magazine as the occasion arises.

From his first editorial in the Autumn Issue of 1949, "Sixtieth Icelandic Celebration", to his timely Christmas message in December, 1955 Jon Laxdal's writings in the magazine have always been well thought out, clear and to the point. His judgement on policy and on material submitted to the magazine has always been logical and fair, even though his opinion no more than that of any other member of the staff, has not always prevailed. The writer does, however, recall a recent occasion when Jon Laxdal advised a course of action contrary to the opinion of a majority on the Editorial Board and on second consideration his point of view was accepted. Subsequent events revealed the soundness of his judgement.

The withdrawal of these two very valuable members of the staff is regretted but it is encouraging to know that both men will continue to be supporters of the magazine. Their good will is the type of asset a publication such as this one needs. There has been a farewell but it is not a parting of the ways.

The Chairman of the Board

IN THE EDITOR'S CONFIDENCE

The policy of this magazine has been not to publish obituaries. One of its primary functions is to record the achievements of people of Icelandic blood who have made a notable contribution to the record of the Icelandic group in this land or to the building of the nations here or to both. At times this record has been under headings such as "Merit Rewarded"; at times under the name of the person concerned. That record surely must not be limited to people living at the time of writing; it could appear with equal propriety shortly after the death of the person whose achievements merit recognition in

permanent form. It would be equally appropriate if the writer went back many years to men and women, long gone, who paved the arduous way that others might follow.

This triple type of record is one of the methods of transmitting material to the English language reader which he will draw upon as he seeks to view in proper perspective the people from that isle in the far North Atlantic and the cultural heritage they brought with them. In the Autumn issue articles will appear on Dr. Sigurdur Julius Johannesson and Thorsteinn Th. Thorsteinsson. —W. J. L.

FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

The doctor's had his final call—he answered it the same
As he has answered every call; no matter whence it came.
He left behind his stethoscope, for there he'll find no pain,
But the little angel children will read Sólskin once again.
There's been a grand reunion beyond the fleecy skies
When Sigurdur embarked upon his trip to Paradise.
The Hagyrðingafélag will be going as of old;
He'll write the poems and stories that on earth he left untold.
There'll be Stefan G. and Matthias and Egill and the rest
And maybe they'll be joined by Jimmy Riley, Eddie Guest.
For the barrier of language will mean nothing to them then
In the universal brotherhood of men who've used the pen.
Though we who loved him here below may drop a wayward tear,
There'll be added joy in Heaven now that Sigurdur is there.
He'd seen so many go before; he'd stood so staunchly by,
That we almost had a notion that the doctor couldn't die.
But we know that death is master both of science and of art.
He's done his duty nobly; he has acted out his part.
We know that he was weary and we know he wanted rest;
We know that what has come to pass has happened for the best.
But the memories we cherish will not waver or grow dim
And we'll try our level best to be a little bit like him. —Art Reykdal

Davíð Stefánsson *at the Sixty-Year Mark*

By PROFESSOR RICHARD BECK

(A Paper presented at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, May 6, 1955)

Down through the centuries, the Icelanders have, generally speaking, cherished their poets to an uncommon degree and assigned to them a high place of honor. However, I do not think it an exaggeration to say that never has an Icelandic poet enjoyed greater popularity in his day nor received such generous tribute as did Davíð Stefánsson on his fiftieth anniversary, and, in an even richer measure, on the occasion of his sixtieth anniversary on January 21, 1955.

He was eulogized at a festive banquet in Reykjavík, the capital. The National Theatre of Iceland gave a special gala performance of his notable and widely admired play, *Gullna Hliðið* (The Golden Gate), in his honor, and earlier in the day of the anniversary, a group of the poet's friends presented a bust of him as a gift to the National Theatre. In that fashion he took his rightful place among the leading dramatists of Iceland who have previously been similarly honored.

Davíð Stefánsson was born at the farm of Fagriskógur in Eyjafjörður in Northern Iceland. The city of Akureyri, where he has made his home for years or in its vicinity, signally honored him on his anniversary by electing him an Honorary Citizen, in that respect ranking him with its other most famous sons or residents: the Rev. Matthías Jochumsson, the national poet and hymnologist; Jón Sveinsson (Svensson), the widely famed writer

of juvenile books; and Professor Finnur Jónsson, the great scholar in the realm of Old Icelandic literature.

Davíð Stefánsson was the recipient of numerous other honors in connection with his sixtieth anniversary, all of which, no doubt, brought him great satisfaction, for they were a striking manifestation of the rare esteem which he himself personally and his poetry enjoy on the part of his nation. Nevertheless, I believe that the birthday anniversary honor most pleasing to him was the unique recognition of having designated in his honor a special day in all the schools of Iceland, for the purpose of acquainting the younger generation with his works. This day was known as "Móðurmálsdagur" (Mother-Tongue Day), and nothing could have been more fitting, for in Davíð Stefánsson's gifted hands, in verse and prose alike, the sonorous and wealthy Icelandic tongue has been a pliant and many-stringed instrument.

This brings me to a brief evaluation of his position in present-day Icelandic literature and his important contribution to it. With the late Stefán Sigurðsson frá Hvítadal (1887-1933), Davíð Stefánsson stands as one of the two great pioneers of that new and flourishing period in Icelandic lyric poetry which followed in the wake of World War I. These pioneers of the movement, and the many who imitated them, carried on, in some respects, the Neo-Romanticism of their predecessors, but were primarily concerned with expressing their own and often tempestuous inner life, and stressed

naturalness and flexibility in their poetic diction and verse form as the necessary medium for the free and full play of their emotional outpourings and flights of the imagination. The national note runs strong in the works of these poets; the folk-poetry and the folk-lore, in which the soul of the nation had most fully and characteristically revealed itself, became for them a rich source of inspiration. That is particularly true of Davíð Stefánsson, who can, in many ways, be considered the most highly articulate and characteristic spokesman of his generation and the literary movement in question.

The folk-poetry and folk-lore element was, in fact, a dominant note in the remarkable book of poems, *Svartar fjaðrir* (Black Feathers), with which he made his triumphant entry into Icelandic literature back in 1919. These poems were characterized by a new strain in terms of simplicity and naturalness as well as rare poetic quality. At the same time they had such a wide appeal, to young and old alike, because they came in reality from the very heart of the nation itself; in spirit, mood, and language they had, as already indicated, their roots deep in the soil of Icelandic folk-poetry, and the subject-matter was not infrequently from the same realm of folk-lore. Nevertheless, these poems were the new personal creation of the poet himself. Rightly it has been emphasized, most recently by Professor Steingrímur J. Þorsteinsson in his address at the Reykjavík banquet honoring the poet in his sixtieth anniversary, that Davíð Stefánsson brilliantly continued the work of his predecessors in freeing Icelandic poetry from the shackles of intricate and stereotyped verse forms and overly ornate language, inheritance from the Skaldic and *rímur*

poetry, and replaced such verse forms and poetic diction with lighter and more flexible meters and simple natural language. His contribution in that direction has indeed been very great and influential, although, fortunately, he has not gone to the extreme of throwing overboard the characteristic and time-honored alliteration in Icelandic poetry; and when he so desires, he can handle the more involved traditional verse forms with ease and skill. He has, in short, to a highly successful degree, merged the new and the old, built his modern poetic mansions on the solid foundations of the past, expanded the boundaries of Icelandic poetry without turning his back on his rich literary heritage.

The poems in the spirit of folk-lore and on folk-themes, included in *Svartar fjaðrir*, range from the concentrated "Brúðarskórnir" (The Bridal Slippers), where a tragic love story is dramatically told in three stanzas, to the impassioned and exotic portrayal of "Abballabba-lá", a dangerous but alluring witch in the forest. Other chords, lyrics and contemplative, are struck in the poet's remarkable first collection of poems.

The publication of *Svartar fjaðrir* not only marked the beginning of an epoch in present-day Icelandic poetry, but also established its young author as a national poet of first importance. With his later works he has solidified his prominent literary position and added to his reputation. He has been an exceptionally prolific poet. In the course of a little more than one-third of a century, his seven books of poetry, three plays, and a two-volume novel, have all been reprinted, and most of them several times. His collected poems have appeared in three editions, and his *Svartar fjaðrir* has been pub-

lished no less than six times, two new editions of this first book of his appearing in connection with his sixtieth anniversary. This large number of editions during the poet's lifetime is without a parallel in the history of Icelandic literature, and eloquently bespeaks Davíð Stefánsson's immense popularity and wide appeal to his countrymen.

On his anniversary there was also published in Reykjavík an extensive selection from his poem, translated into Norwegian *landsmaal* by Ivar Orkland, visiting professor in Norwegian language and literature at the University of Iceland. Entitled *Eg sigler í haust*, the volume is highly representative of the poet's works. Icelandic critics have also been justly lavish in their praise of these translations, for they are exceptionally well executed, characterized by fidelity to the thought and the language of the originals and by the reproduction of their spirit in an uncommonly large measure.

It goes without saying that in Davíð Stefánsson's vast production not all the poems are by any means equal in literary excellence and merit. At the same time, while it is a hazardous business to attempt to predict literary longevity, for Time is a relentless judge, it appears certain that many of his poems are destined to live long in Icelandic literature because of their originality, beauty and universality.

His poetry has a wide range both in terms of varied themes and commensurate emotional quality, running the gamut from high elevation and seriousness to robust and rollicking humor. He excels in descriptive poetry, whether of the Icelandic scene or of foreign lands which he has visited. He has written impressive historical poems on biblical and Icelandic sub-

jects, beautiful and inspiring hymns, and challenging social satires which reveal his deep human sympathy and strong sense of social justice, but also, in their broad humanity, bespeak his refusal to align himself with any political doctrine or group. He often rises to great heights of impassioned eloquence, while the genuine lyric touch is the hall-mark of many of his finest poems, not least his nature and love poems, vibrating with tender feeling and often with an undercurrent of sadness and longing.

"All my life is a pilgrimage and a search", he says in one of his poems, and quite rightly, for the spirit of the wanderer is fundamental in his poetry. This restless, adventurous spirit runs like a swift-flowing stream through his poem "Eg sigli i haust" (I Sail in the Fall), aflame with emotional fire. The opening and closing stanzas follow in Dr. Watson Kirkconnell's translation:

"Summer is dying, is dying,
And cold is the breath of fall.
The waves are beginning to labor
And beat on the ocean-wall.
The leaves are blown from the
branches.
The children have frost-reddened
lips.
The birds are departing. Keen strain
at their cables
The storm-hearted ships.
I yield to a mighty power.
I am drawn by a hidden hand.
And the sea—the sea is calling
In tones I cannot withstand.
I am the bird that passes,
The ship that the tempests blow.
My song is a song of parting.
I came, and I go.
I am borne by breeze and billow
From land on to land.
I ask not the people for praises
Or honoring hand.

I long to be blest with friendship,
 But am everywhere ever alone,
 Ever a man without country,
 A vagrant in every zone.
 But my song is a song of parting.
 Surf beats the ocean-wall.
 I came from the south in summer
 And sail in the fall.

On the other hand, he is deeply attached to his native soil, to which his hymn of praise to his scenic and beloved Eyjafjörður bear witness. His strong and fruitful interest in Icelandic folk-poetry and folk-lore, already noted, has also furnished him with the theme and inspiration for his brilliantly conceived and constructed play, *Gullna hliðið* (The Golden Gate, 1941), a theatrical triumph on the Icelandic stage and also very successfully presented in Norway (both in Oslo and Bergen), in Finland (Helsinki), and in Great Britain (Edinburgh). Akin in theme and spirit is his two-volume novel, *Solon Islandus* (1940), a broad picture of Icelandic national life, but particularly noteworthy for its poetic style, narrative skill and profound psychological insight.

The national note, always pronounced, has grown increasingly stronger in Davíð Stefánsson's poetry, along with his spiritual development, richer idealism and wider sympathy. His prize-winning cycle of poems commemorating the Millennial of the Icelandic Parliament (Althing) in 1930 is both highly lyrical and eloquent, all in all a very impressive poem, in which a large panorama of the history of the Icelandic nation, together with a deep insight into its life and fate, are expressed in inspired and memorable passages, like the following, quoted in Mr. Arthur Gook's translation:

"Beneath the Aurora sky a valiant
 nation
 A thousand years has waged her bitter
 strife,
 Her star of faith an endless inspiration,
 An everlasting miracle her life."

Equally notable and challenging in its alert and noble patriotism was the poem which Davíð Stefánsson wrote for the tenth anniversary of the Icelandic Republic on June 17, 1954, entitled "*Ávarp Fjallkonunnar*" (The Maid of the Mountain Speaks). It amply reveals his undiminished vigor of thought as well as his mastery of the Icelandic language and metrical form.

Nor has he been left untouched by the storms and stresses of our turbulent times; the impact of World War II upon him is clearly seen in his latest book of poems published in 1947. His love of liberty and deep-rooted sense of justice flame forth in fearless attacks on tyrants and their cohorts of whatever ilk, on greed, injustice and war-mongering. In particular has his heart been touched by the fate of Norway during the war, which is not surprising, as he has ever been a champion of inter-Scandinavian co-operation being well aware of the basic kinship, racially and culturally, between the Northern nations.

The clash between freedom and tyranny is also the central theme in Davíð Stefánsson's second most important play, *Vopn guðanna* (The Weapons of the Gods), 1943, which in subject-matter is based upon *Barlaams ok Josaphats saga*, one of the many Icelandic medieval romances, but the poet uses the story primarily as a starting point. In many ways a noteworthy drama, this play contains splendid lyric passages, and is frequently characterized by vigor, genuine

emotional quality, eloquence and poetic flight of the imagination. Its challenging and timely message is expressed in the following lines uttered by the prophet who plays such a prominent part in the drama:

"Í sannleikanum býr sigrandi guðamáttur,
í sverði furstans deyjandi aldarháttur."

Which may be paraphrased as follows: "Inherent in truth is victorious divine power, while the sword of the ruler embodies the ways of a dying age."

That idealistic and forward-looking philosophy of life reverberates through Davíð Stefánsson's poetry, and, therefore, I take leave of him on that high note.

Jubilee Celebration at Yorkton, Saskatchewan



A prominent feature of the monster parade staged by the United Commercial Travellers in connection with the annual fair and Jubilee Celebration at Yorkton, Sask., last summer was a colorful Scandinavian float painstakingly prepared under the supervision of Mrs. Christine Egilsson. The float, shown in the picture here, brought forth many complimentary remarks from townspeople and the press. The float was in the form of a Viking ship, authentically modelled, with a falcon at the prow. Riding in the float were representatives of the five Scandinavian countries, Iceland was represented by Miss Mavis Goodman whose father, Jack Goodman, is Icelandic. She was attired in the formal Icelandic costume known as "skautbúningur." Representing Sweden was Miss Mae Chilman while Miss Victoria Berg represented Norway. Her mother is Icelandic. The Danish flag was borne by Mrs. G. Perry who is of Icelandic extraction. Finland was represented by Mrs. Erja Luross.

ICE AND FIRE

By PROFESSOR GILBERT HIGHET

Gilbert Highet was born in Scotland. In his university training he specialized in the Classics, Greek and Latin, and since 1938 has been Anthon Professor of Latin Language and Literature at Columbia University. For some years he has given weekly radio talks on literature and is now regarded as one of the top radio lecturers in the United States. In 1953 his first collection of published radio talks "People, Places and Books" became a best seller. The essay below is from his 1954 book which he entitled "A Clerk of Oxenford". In his preface to this book he expressed the hope that the volume would be considered "as a book of essays, and not a mere transcription of radio talks". The essay on "Ice and Fire", as well as the other excellent essays in that volume, is ample fulfillment of that hope.

The Icelandic Canadian acknowledges its indebtedness to the author, Gilbert Highet, and to the publishers, the Oxford University Press, New York, for their permission to publish this essay. This is one of the ways in which the fundamentals of the Icelandic heritage can be transmitted to the English reading public. —Ed.

It takes courage to settle a new land: to abandon one's home, to risk poverty, and starvation, to struggle with a strange climate, to fight the natives, or, if there are none, to wrestle with other incomers desperate and ruthless. As well as courage, it takes wisdom. New institutions have to be devised, if the land is to be permanently settled. Laws and schools, social and intellectual structures have to be created. It is not enough for such a settler to be a farmer or a fisherman: he must also become something of a statesman, his wife something of a doctor and a teacher, and both of them inventors. Not all settlements are fully successful. Some new countries still remain empty, or half peopled. But it is always moving and uplifting to read the story of a successful settlement, and see how the new country created new people to inhabit it.

Such were the Pilgrims, and the Virginia settlers. Yet there is an earlier tale of such adventure which is less famous through the world, but has produced better literature. This is the history of Iceland. A remote place it is—a lava island, larger than Ireland, full of volcanoes, far in the northern Atlantic. The Noremen discovered it about 850. (That was the beginning of their great period, when they roamed as far as Constantinople in the east and Massachusetts in the west, conquered Ireland, harried Scotland, settled down in England, and took over Normandy). Just about a thousand years ago, Iceland was well populated and was growing into one of the earliest Western republics. The main stream of immigrants was Norwegian; but there were Celts, too, from the Scottish islands and from Ireland. It was a hard life; but it was uncommonly interesting. It produced some tough men; some brave women; some fine books.

There are many kinds of Icelandic books—poetry, myth, history. The best of them all, the rarest and most memorable, are the sagas. A saga is simply a tale—not a piece of fiction, but a true story about a famous man, or a powerful family, or a dramatic event. Soon after the death of a hero, the Icelandic storytellers began to collect the chief incidents of his career and to weave them into a continuous story; then they would tell it from memory at parties, just like the Gaelic tale-smiths and the Homeric poets. About A.D. 1200 these stories began to be written down. Thirty or forty of them have been preserved to our time. They

give us a rich, a fascinating, picture of the settlers' life, with its violent passions, its savage cruelties, its tremendous gallantry and determination, and (most interesting of all) its gradual progress into culture, from anarchy to order, from brute force to law, from paganism to Christianity, from the boyish bravado of rovers and pirates into the steady energy of thoughtful men: indeed, one might almost say from the sheer lunacy of primitive savages into the sanity of the civilized.

The Icelandic sagas fill two large bookshelves. I have not read them all: few have, except specialists, such as the charming old Cambridge professor in C. P. Snow's **The Masters**, who has them all in his head and has built a huge relief map of Iceland on which to trace their heroes' exploits. But I have read some of them, including the best, and I like rereading them. They are usually well translated, for their language (apart from the esoteric bits of poetry) is simple and quite close to ours, and their stories are straightforward. My two favorites are the story of a formidable outlaw, **Grettir the Strong**, and the story of a wise and gentle statesman, **Burnt Nial**—so called because he was burned to death in his own house by an enemy.

Nothing gives a better idea of the style of the sagas, and of the straight-spoken courage of the men and women who inspired them, than a quotation of one of their greatest scenes. Nial and his family have been surrounded in his lonely farmhouse. Failing to break in, his enemies have set fire to the doors and the roof. Flosi, their chief, allows the women and children and servants to escape, and then calls to Nial himself.

Flosi said, 'I will offer thee, master Nial, leave to go out, for it is un-

worthy that thou shouldst burn indoors.'

'I will not go out,' said Nial, 'for I am an old man, and little fitted to avenge my sons, but I will not live in shame.'

Then Flosi said to (Nial's wife) Bergthora, 'Come thou out, housewife, for I will for no sake burn thee indoors.'

'I was given away to Nial young,' said Bergthora, 'and I have promised him this, that we would both share the same fate.'

After that they both went back into the house.

'What counsel shall we now take?' said Bergthora.

'We will go to our bed,' says Nial, 'and lay us down; I have long been eager for rest.'

Then she said to the boy Thord, 'Thee will I take out, and thou shalt not burn in here.'

'Thou hast promised me this grandmother', says the boy, 'that we should never part so long as I wished to be with thee; but methinks it is much better to die with thee and Nial than to live after you.'

Then she bore the boy to her bed, and Nial spoke to his steward and said, 'Now thou shalt see where we lay us down, and how I lay us out, for I mean not to stir an inch thence, whether reek or burning smart me, and so thou wilt be able to guess where to look for our bones.' . . .

Skarphedinn saw how his father laid him down, and how he laid himself out, and then he said, 'Our father goes early to bed, and that is what was to be looked for, for he is an old man.'

When you read any of the sagas for the first time, one thing is likely to disconcert you a little—and, oddly enough, it is a quality in them that the Icelanders themselves love. This

is that they are full of genealogy. It is like visiting one of the Southern states, where everyone is related to everyone else and people can trace their relationships even unto the ninth and tenth generation. So also, the people in the sagas were the First Families of Iceland. Their descendants love hearing about them and following their movements, their marriages and feuds and exiles and adventures; so sometimes you have to wade through many chapters of family chronicle to strike the main stream of the story. This is a bit boring; but it does give a strong impression of sincerity.

The next thing you notice is the extraordinary will power and courage of the people, both men and women. very few cowards came to Iceland across the gray North Atlantic, and not many were born there. The men were both pioneers and pirates—for sometimes they would farm for a few seasons, and then take to their viking ships to loot the coast of Europe, returning rich and refreshed, or else dying in battle and leaving their skins to decorate an English church door. There are many stories that show them taking an oath or making a silent resolution, and then keeping it through years of fierce opposition and suffering. Everyone had some courage at some moments. The saga people admired the courage that is needed for a long, grim struggle against fearful odds, and most of all the courage a man can show even when he knows he is outnumbered and finished. Some of the finest incidents in the sagas show a brave man facing death with a crisp epigram, or with a controlled and powerful gesture that shows his stout heart still unbroken and unbreakable. One young viking on a long voyage got a boil on the side of his foot. When he disembarked, and was taken in to be

presented to the powerful Earl Eric, he would not limp, though the boil oozed blood and pus at every step. The Earl asked him what was wrong. Gunnlaug said he had a boil under his foot. 'Yet you do not limp,' said the Earl. The young man replied, 'I shall not go lame while both my legs are the same length.' By this action and this bold utterance, he showed himself as good a man as anyone there, tacitly challenged the Earl, and dominated himself.

As you read on in the sagas, you will also be impressed by the silence of the people. In Iceland, the greater a man or woman is, the less he or she talks. (This is the reverse of our own system.) They brood for long periods; then, at a crucial moment, they say something powerful and final, words which they have for many months been distilling and storing, or a sentence which is slow, quiet, but filled with implosive energy. Once a group of the hero Gunnar's enemies surrounded his house. One of them climbed the roof to discover a way in. Gunnar stabbed him through the window, and he fell down. His friends said, 'Is Gunnar at home?' He answered, 'Find out for yourselves: I know his blade is at home,' and so he died. Sometimes at crises the men remain utterly silent, which is even more forcible. (As Grettir said, 'No man is a fool if he keeps silent.') When Hvitserk heard of the cruel death of his father in a pit full of snakes, he was playing a game like chess. He said nothing, but squeezed a piece he was holding so tightly that the blood burst out under his fingernails. Listening to these grim phrases or watching these grimmer silences, we remember that Iceland is a country where the winters are long and the mountain snows are endless, but the volcanoes smoke from time to time,

and then, with long-pent-up violence, erupt.

Another good thing about the people of the sagas is their bodily strength and beauty. The stories are full of tremendous physical energy, feats we should hardly believe if we could not parallel them from the lives of other primitives like the Zulus and the American Indians. The men were terrific wrestlers, swimmers, runners, weightlifters. Both the men and the women were notable for their good looks. A wind of health blows from the sagas.

The stories themselves are long, complex, episodic. Usually they not only tell a tale but describe many different characters, pose a number of problems for meditation, and vivify a complete sector of social history. They are not epics, because they are in prose and lack the superb marching rhythms and dazzling imagery of Homer or Milton. They are closest to the modern historical novel, the objectively told stories like *Ivanhoe* and *Salammbô*. They are solid books, full of solid virtues and vices. If I were a lonely man, or a despondent man, believing this was a terrifying age of hitherto unparalleled anxiety and danger, or if I were a young man who thought I lacked courage and wanted to train for it, I should read half a dozen of the Icelandic stories, beginning with *Grettir the Strong* and *Burnt Nial*.

They can still inspire living authors. In the last generation or so, new stories have been written in the manner of the sagas, and some of them are well worth reading. Two of their authors are Scandinavian; both women, and both Nobel Prize winners. The other two are British—one English and one Scots, both of Norse ancestry.

The Swedish writer, Selma Lagerlöf, in 1891 produced *Gösta Berling's Story*,

a cycle of wildly romantic short stories set in modern Sweden, rather resembling Isak Dinesen's *Seven Gothic Tales*. They are handsomely told but are scarcely saga-like, apart from their arrangement and their occasional violence. The Norwegian Sigrid Undset has two long, complex historical novels about thirteenth-century Scandinavia: *The Master of Hestviken* and *Kristin Lavrandsdatter*. They seem to me to have all the disadvantages of the saga style without all its advantages, for they are intricate without being energetic; but the atmosphere is beautifully sustained and separate incidents are sometimes strong and memorable.

These two women really wrote romantic saga-novels. But two men tried to produce tales which—if discovered in manuscript—might be pronounced genuine Icelandic works. Eric Linklater, in *The Men of Ness*, re-created the life of the vikings, centering on the sea. It reminds us that in stirring periods of history it is only safe and quiet people who live in towns, while the men who become the masters of events inhabit plain and desert and sea. His vikings look something like modern fighters of the air. I cannot recommend his book wholeheartedly, because, like the salt fish the vikings ate, it is a little too hard and crisp for everyone's taste; but it is full of vitamins.

The most exciting modern saga of the old North is *Eric Brighteyes*, by Henry Rider Haggard. Many readers know *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, and the Allan Quatermain books, but *Eric Brighteyes* is neglected, partly because readers do not know how to approach it. It is a stirring Icelandic tale combining elements from many of the sagas, together with much Norse mythology. Its hero Eric is brave and handsome, but unlucky. Two women love

him—which is all the more ill luck. He is poor and has powerful enemies. His heroism does not mean success: it means loneliness and defeat; but it ends in glory. The tale is filled with daring and uncanny adventures. Below is a Wagnerian moment from its very end, the night before Eric's last battle, when he sits with his only friend waiting for the dawn. The two men see the aurora borealis, the northern lights, above the peak of Mount Hecla: but this is what appears to them.

"In the rosy glow there sat three giant forms of fire, and their shapes were the shapes of women. Before them was a loom of blackness that stretched from earth to sky, and they wove at it with threads of flame. They were splendid and terrible to see. Their hair streamed behind them like meteor flames, their eyes shone like lightning, and their breasts gleamed like the polished bucklers of the gods. They wove fiercely at the loom of blackness, and as they wove they sang. The voice of the one was as the wind whistling through the pines; the voice of the other was as the sound of rain hissing on deep waters; and the voice of the third was as the moan of the sea. They wove fearfully and they sang loudly, but what they sang might not be known. Now the web grew and the woof grew, and a picture came upon the loom—a great picture written in fire. Behold! it was the semblance of a storm-awakened sea, and a giant ship fled before the gale—a dragon of war, and in the ship were piled the corpses of men, and on these lay another corse, as one lies upon a bed. They looked and the face of the corse grew bright.

It was the face of Eric, and his head rested upon the dead heart of [his friend] Skallagrim."

Eric Brighteyes is a fine book. It does not, of course, supersede the ancient sagas: it is to them as Scott's novels are to the ballads and chronicles, more detailed and less primitive, more artistic and better balanced but less original, still a modern assertion of trust in permanent ideals of courage and nobility: it is a bridge between our own fugitive present and bold unknown moments of the past, a rainbow path along which heroes can come to challenge us, and beautiful women, to make our youths aspire to that love which is won only through suffering and resolution.

The Story of Burnt Nial (tr. G. W. Dasent, Everyman's Library 558)

The Saga of Grettir the Strong (tr. G. A. Hight, Everyman's Library 699).

Four Icelandic Sagas (tr. Gwyn Jones, American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1935).

Three Icelandic Sagas (tr. M. H. Scargill and M. Schlauch, American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1950).

Laxdaela Saga (tr. Thorstein Veblen, Huebsch, 1925).

The Saga of the Volsungs (tr. M. Schlauch, Norton, 1930).

H. R. Haggard, **Eric Brighteyes** (in *Lost Civilizations*, Dover, 1953).

Selma Lagerlöf, **Gösta Berling's Story** (tr. P. B. Flach, Doubleday, Post, 1917).

E. Linklater, **The Men of Ness** (British Book Center, 1951).

Sigrid Undset, **The Master of Hestviken**, (tr. A. G. Chater, Knopf, 1934).

Sigrid Undset, **Kristin Lavransdatter** (tr. C. Archer and J. S. Scott, Knopf, 1934).

Asa Wright and Her Plantation in Trinidad, B.W.I.

by W. J. LINDAL

(Continued from the Spring Issue)

THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE SPRINGHILL ESTATE

As already stated the Springhill Estate nestles in the upper reaches of the Arima Valley. Behind the plantation is the heavy forest and jungle of the Forest Reserve in the Northern Range, a mountain range extending east and west across the north part of the island. Almost directly behind and north of the Springhill Estate is Morne Bleu Mountain, the fourth highest mountain on Trinidad. Even at that height the mountains are densely covered with trees and heavy undergrowth. The area around Morne Bleu is comparatively unexplored and in the tropical forest many rare animals are to be found. There is the tayra which resembles the North American fisher; the kinkajou, about three feet long, with a very long tail which it winds around branches for support; and an animal of the otter family, locally called a wood-dog. There are deer and wild hogs and one unusual and most interesting member of the rodent family called the agouti. It is light of foot, about the size of a rabbit, brownish or grizzled in color.

The house on the Springhill Estate is about twelve hundred feet above sea level and it is so placed that from the front there is a magnificent view down the Arima River valley. Eight miles lower down the valley lies the town of Arima which arose from one of the original Caribbean settlements. A road, called the Arima-Blanchisseuse Road, crosses the main ridge of the Northern Range about three miles

from the Springhill house. The elevation at the point where the road crosses the ridge is 1800 feet above sea level and from this spot there is a most beautiful view down two valleys, the Arima and Lopinot. In the distance about twelve miles away is the Trinidad airport, called Piarco, situated on the plain below which extends to the sea. Although the road, which the Wrights had to build, covers a distance of only three miles, as the crow flies, it is actually about five miles in length and covers a drop in elevation of 600 feet. It can be truly said that it zig-zags both vertically and horizontally.

About half a mile below the estate, in the Arima Valley, is a very narrow gorge which has the appearance of a cave and is always referred to as such. That is the place the Wrights were going to visit when they encountered the boa-constrictor.

COMMERCIAL PRODUCE

Three products of the soil are produced in commercial quantities on the Springhill Estate: cocoa, coffee and citrus fruits. The cocoa and coffee trees are a little larger than the wild plum trees of Manitoba but the leaves are much larger and the trees, especially the cocoa tree, much sturdier. On account of the very hot tropical sun both the cocoa and the coffee trees require shade trees for protection. The shade trees are discussed below.

A considerable amount of work has to be done before the cocoa and coffee are ready for the market. In the first place the fruit has to be gathered. On account of the uneven terrain and

heavy undergrowth the trees are hard to reach so the gathering of the cocoa pods and the coffee cherries, especially on the Springhill Estate, is both slow and tedious. But after they have been gathered and brought to the specially constructed buildings the main job has to be performed of separating the cocoa and coffee beans from the pulp in which they are enclosed. The two processes differ and must be discussed separately.

The cocoa, which should be spelt



Part of a cacao tree with cacao pod inset. Note the two sets of cacao-beans inside the pod; cocoa and chocolate are manufactured from the cacao-beans.

cacao*, pod is from 7 to 10 inches long and 3 to 4 inches in diameter and is elliptical in form. It has a hard leathery casing which has to be broken and inside there are five compartments, each containing from 5 to 12 seeds which are imbedded in a soft pinkish pulp. The first step is to break the shells

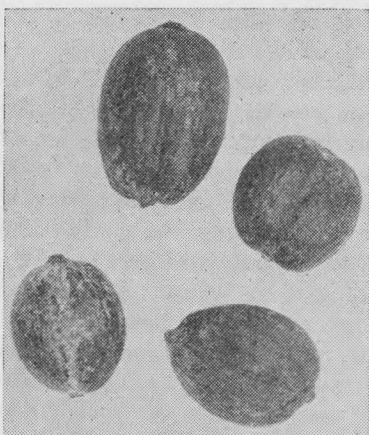
and separate the mass of pulp from the cacao-beans. The beans are then fermented or "sweated" in special houses constructed for that purpose. Mrs. Wright has such a building on her estate. The beans are sometimes piled in heaps covered with earth and leaves or they may be put in baskets lined with banana leaves which are very large and well suited for that purpose. The fermentation takes from one to twelve days and during that time the beans have to be stirred daily. When the fermentation is completed the cacao-beans are washed and dried. The appearance of the beans may be improved and this is done in two ways. They may be "clayed" by having a thin coat of earth applied. The polishing removes mildew and what may be left of dried mucilage from the original pulp. The polishing is often done by "dancing the cacao", that is, treading a heap with bare feet. This is common in the West Indies but polishing machines have been invented for the purpose. The cacao-beans are then ready for shipment in bags to market. The manufacture of cacao powder for making cocoa drinks and chocolate pulp for making chocolate takes place in the import countries.

The coffee tree is not quite as tall as the cacao and the leaves are not so heavy. The fruit is about the size of a small cherry and is of a dark red color. About two or three cherries are clustered together on a branch at the axils of the leaves. Each fruit contains two coffee beans embedded in yellowish pulp. Inside the pulp and covering the two coffee beans is a thin parchment which remains after the pulp has been separated. Between each coffee bean and the parchment is a delicate covering called the "silver skin". The two flat sides of the coffee beans face each other and the two beans fit

* The cacao tree must not be confused with the cocoanut tree, a tall tree similar to the tall variety of palm trees.

snugly within the two protecting covers.

As in the case of cocoa production the main work after the coffee cherries have been gathered is to separate the pulp from the coffee beans. The parchment and silver skin are removed later. There are two methods of separating the pulp. There is a dry method: the coffee cherries are spread on a flat surface and allowed to dry in the sun. This is the more primitive method and originated in Arabia. Then there is the wet method, the one in common



Four parchment coffee-beans inside of which are two actual coffee beans facing each other.

practice in the West Indies and often called The West Indies method. The coffee cherries are put in a tank of water. The mature berries sink and are drawn off from the tanks through pipes into the pulping machines. In these machines a rough surfaced cylinder revolves close to a curved iron or steel plate. In this way a lot of the pulp is loosened from the berries. The mixture of pulp and berries is carried to a second tank of water and stirred. The more light pulp is removed by a stream of water and the berries are allowed to settle. Then there is a waiting period and a certain degree of

fermentation is allowed to take place. There are subsequent washings, accompanied by trampling with bare feet. This is done by the natives. Mrs. Wright says, with a wink of her eye, that if you give them a little rum their feet move faster. (She is a tee-totaller herself). This is followed by stirring by rakes, or machines especially made for that purpose. In this way the parchment covering, with the coffee beans inside, is clean and free of the pulp. The beans are then dried on barbecues or in trays—in some districts by artificial heat. In this state the coffee is called parchment coffee and it is ready for the market as it can be shipped and kept in that state for a considerable time. The removing of the parchment and silver skin may however be done on the plantation. After a thorough drying the parchment is broken by a roller and it, as well as the silver skin, removed by fanning. Rubbing is applied and more winnowing and finally the beans are in the condition of ordinary green coffee beans. Later the coffee beans are sorted by means of sieves into uniform sizes and broken beans and foreign material removed. It is estimated that a coffee tree yields about two pounds of marketable coffee.

Mrs. Wright grows two kinds of coffee, the usual "plain grown" variety and then a very special grade of the famous Blue Mountain coffee, a variety mostly produced in Jamaica.

The chief citrus fruits grown on Mrs. Wright's plantation are grapefruit and oranges. The terrain, however, makes it impossible to form large fruit groves and for that reason citrus fruits are not produced on a large scale on the Springhill Estate. But that does not mean that the trees are neglected or inferior fruit produced. There is a grapefruit tree not far from the

house close to the improvised road. It is about the size of a large apple tree. At Christmas time last winter it was covered with fruit of full size though not quite ripe. The fruits were huge and of a uniform size, each one just as large as the very largest that once in a while appears on the Canadian market. When fruit of abnormal size is seen one is prone to think that the tree must have been fed with rich vitamins with plenty of fertilizer. But not this tree. It received the ordinary care of the other citrus fruit trees on the estate.

THE "MAMMA" AND OTHER SHADE TREES

The tropical sun is too hot for the cacao and coffee trees, at least in the West Indies, and they thrive only under the shade of larger growing trees. The coverage, however, must neither be too thick nor too thin; in fact it must and does vary. Here nature (why not say God?) has produced just the right kind of shade trees. Some of these valuable protecting trees are on the island in the wild state and the cacao trees grow under them or close by. Some are planted and then the berry trees planted or grown from seed under them. Coverage is provided by a variety of trees but only three will be mentioned here.

The most famous shade tree is the Immortelle, of which there are two kinds, the Mountain and the Swamp. (*Erythrina Poeppegiana* and *Erythrina Glauca*.) These and other trees of the *Erythrina* family have been regarded by the natives as poisonous and there is a legend that anyone sitting under one of them may become blind. This is an exaggeration but it is admitted by botanists that somewhat poisonous juices can be extracted from the seeds and leaves. That legend, however, does

not affect the popularity of these trees. In a book called "Flowering Trees of the Caribbean", published by Rinehart and Company, Inc., of New York and Toronto, it is stated that these trees "are planted without qualms in private gardens for ornament, on innumerable coffee and cacao plantations for shade, and in the botanical gardens where travelers have been known to sit under an Immortelle for hours 'without going blind.'"

The Mountain Immortelle grows anywhere in the tropics on high ground and hillsides up to about 4000 feet above sea level and is the more common and popular variety. It has a bright orange flower which grows in clusters. The trees shed the foliage before the flowering period and when the trees are in full bloom, from December to March, they present one of the most glorious sights in Trinidad. This is especially so on the Springhill Estate where masses of orange-vermilion flowers are displayed on the slopes of the Arima Valley with the heavy tropical green forest as a background. The view at that time is equally beautiful from a low-flying airplane passing almost anywhere over the island.

These trees provide an ideal shade for cacao and coffee trees as neither the trifoliolate leaves nor the flowers are too heavy to prevent the needed amount of sunlight, or rain, going through. The largest trees reach a height of about eighty feet. In Trinidad the Mountain Immortelle is locally called the "cocoa-mamma" or "coffee mamma" tree—words truly descriptive of the function it serves.

The Swamp Immortelle produces a flower of a salmon color, not as showy as that of the Mountain Immortelle and hence not so popular as an ornament. It also has trifoliolate

leaves but the leaves are thicker and have a grayish-green down on the underside. The Swamp Immortelle grows to a height of only about thirty or forty feet but spreads much wider than the Mountain Immortelle. This is as if it had been ordered. At sea level the temperature is much higher than on the slopes of the hills and more shade is required. In Trinidad the Swamp Immortelle is locally called the "water mamma".

Another shade tree, the Samanea Saman, has a legend about it but it is different from that of the Immor-

moisture from the air during the day and transpire a certain amount of it at night). People discovered long ago that everything grows under a Saman tree just about as well and in some cases better than in the open. The natives gave these facts their own interpretation and came to the conclusion that the damp blankets and the unusual fertility of the soil under the branches of the Saman tree could only mean either that raindrops filtered from the branches during the night or that water from the leaves made its way down the tree during the night



An old Saman tree in Trinidad, west of Government House, in the central part of the city. In one direction it spreads its branches one hundred and eighty-seven feet.

telles. The legend is that it rains all night under a Saman tree. There are two unchallengeable facts about the Saman tree upon which this legend is based. Travellers discovered in the early days that if they laid their blankets under a Saman tree they would wake up early in the morning chilled and wet as if they had been sleeping on wet ground or it had rained during the night. (Many tropical trees absorb

and into the soil above the roots and thus moistened the blankets. The tree is very commonly called the "rain tree" throughout the Caribbean and in Colombia and Venezuela.

The Saman tree is also called the "cow tamarind" but this is not based upon a legend. The fruit of the Saman tree, a large pod about eight inches long and an inch thick, is commonly used food for cattle. It is called a tam-

arind because it has a special property like the tamarind in that it folds its leaves.

The rain tree grows to a normal height of about eighty feet but it has an enormous spread, probably greater than any other tree in the world. The largest Saman tree in Trinidad is in the Santa Cruz Valley about five miles from Trinidad. It covers an acre and a half and the spread is about 250 feet. The tree is not very high and the strain on the main trunk from the weight of branches extending laterally well over 120 feet must be enormous. The owner, Major Knaggs, has a nursery under the tree, called "San Antonio Nursery", to which the public is invited. The growth in the nursery and outside under the tree is amazing, just as profuse as if it were out in the open, but in a different clime.

The tree itself, which is close to two

hundred years old, is covered with parasite plants of various varieties, ranging from drooping vines to the most beautiful orchids which grow there in the wild state. (An orchid is an epiphyte, a plant which grows upon other plants but is not parasitic upon them; it derives sustenance for its development mainly from the air and only partly from decomposed vegetable matter from which the roots grow). But even the vines do not seem to be a drain on the tree and no effort is made to remove them.

The Saman tree forms a perfect umbrella. Although the crown appears heavy the leaves form but one outer layer and all of them are on small twigs at the ends of branches that spread in all directions. The tree loses its leaves four times a year. A few days after the old dry yellow leaves are shed new ones of a shining green very quickly provide the new umbrella.

It is the enormous spread of this huge umbrella which makes it a perfect shade tree. Again nature has provided the needed characteristics. The leaves fold at night and if it rains during the night the drops drip through very easily to the grass or other vegetation below. No wonder people sleeping under a Saman tree would often wake up dripping wet. To sleep under a Saman tree is the same as sleeping out in the open. But the wisdom of the tree, or the Power behind the tree, is even greater than providing an open sieve at night. The leaves close when it rains and even when the sky is only cloudy and more sunshine is needed for the plants below.

People of the temperate zones, who know by experience how difficult it is to grow anything under a tree, are amazed at the green of the grass and the bright colors of the flowers that grow under these God-made umbrellas.



The trunk of the Saman tree under which Major Knaggs has a nursery and an enclosure for small animals, birds and snakes.

They are the only truly orthodox umbrellas which open and close as needed, but not by the hand of man. Needless to add every Saman tree in the parks and gardens of Trinidad is a favorite place for children to play.

Rubber trees have been brought to Trinidad and are cultivated both to produce rubber and to provide shade. Mrs. Wright has a few groves of rubber trees some of which are close to that zig-zag road of hers and may be seen when one dares glance off the road.

THE BEAUTIFUL BIRDS OF TRINIDAD

It would not be fair either to Trinidad or the Springhill Estate to stop without adding a footnote on the birds in Trinidad, especially those found on the estate. The late Mr. Wright built a fine look-out as an extension of the verandah on the south side and in front of the house. He and Mrs. Wright soon discovered that sitting there with suitable binoculars they could observe the birds in action much better than if they had tried to prowls around. After all it is much more instructive to watch a bird when he does not know that anything to fear is around.*

Reference has already been made to the guachara, which Mr. Johnson says is "the most nocturnal bird in the world". It is a handsome bird, chestnut coloured, about the size of a crow. It feeds on oily seeds such as nuts and why it should be endowed with the qualities of being able to pounce upon its prey in the dark is one of those mysteries of nature that may never be solved.

There are many varieties of trogons

* For much of the information about the birds on the Springhill Estate I am indebted to Ray Johnson, a government official in Trinidad who has personal knowledge of bird life on the estate, and has been a frequent visitor there since the Wrights arrived.

which are very beautiful birds with brilliant plumage. The most beautiful variety is the quetzal which has tail feathers two feet long. The upper parts of the throat are iridescent green and the under part crimson. All the varieties are commonly seen on the estate.

Toucans, a fruit eating bird, are fairly common. They have a bill almost as large as the body and both bill and body are brightly coloured. Then there is the bell-bird, so named because its notes are likened to the sound of a bell. Mr. Johnson says the notes sound more like a hammer on an anvil, are very penetrating and carry a great distance. The bird is the size of a thrush.

Ant birds are common around the estate. Contrary to popular belief they do not feed on ants but on insects in the path of the hunting ants. Then there are different kinds of flycatchers. Some of the smaller species have extremely beautiful nests, almost entirely enclosed, made of vegetable down, moss or fine roots of plants.

One bird commonly seen around the Springhill Estate is the spine-tail, which, Mr. Johnson says, wakens you and keeps you awake with his song. The yellow-tailed corn bird is noted for its nest. These birds nest in large colonies of hanging nests, sometimes several feet long. The nests are made of grass and are suspended from the ends of twigs of the Mountain Immortelle.

Then the humming birds! Mr. Johnson says: "At Springhill are the flaming Ruby-topaz, the brilliant Emerald, the almost brilliant white-breasted Emerald, the large and bright Mango, the Jacobin with dark blue back and white underparts; also the forest humming birds, the Hermits, which

construct their beautiful little nests at the end of fernfronds or palm leaves. These latter are birds of the forest entirely and are rather duller in plumage than the humming birds of the open country. There are 17 different humming birds in Trinidad and most of them are found in and around Springhill."

The Springhill Estate is one at

which a traveller could spend many days with pleasure and profit, be he an ornithologist, a naturalist, a pleasure seeker or just someone curious enough to see a modern example of the Icelandic vikings who travelled so far and wide and sought to make homes for themselves wherever they went, and fit themselves into their surroundings.

NORTH DAKOTA ARTISTS

The achievements of four North Dakota Icelanders, a sculptor and three painters, are recorded in the publication, "North Dakota Artists", prepared by the late Paul E. Barr, former head of the Art Department of the University of North Dakota.

The sculptor is the late **Jón Magnús Jonsson** of Upham, North Dakota, born there in 1893. After schooling at Fargo, N. D., he began art studies at the Minneapolis School of Art and through the years had risen to eminence as a sculptor in the United States. He was teacher of sculpture at Cranbrook Academy of Art prior to his death in 1947.

Mr. Barr's record notes the birth in 1893 in Winnipeg of **Emile Walters**, his early education at Gardar, N. D., and first showing of paintings at Grand Forks, his rise to fame from there on and exhibition of his works in leading museums of North America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

It should be noted that since the publication of "North Dakota Art-

ists", Mr. Walters has been commissioned by the United States government to do paintings of historical significance, specifically with reference to the emigration of the first Icelanders to North America more than 600 years ago.

Kristinn P. Armann, the second artist noted, was born near Gardar, N. D., in 1889, and is now living at San Louis Obispo, California, where he is painting extensively. His first art training was at Gustavus Adolphus College from which he went to the Chicago Art Institute. Mr. Armann is a sculptor as well and his works have been widely exhibited in the northern United States.

The fourth North Dakota Icelandic artist, a painter, is **Thorarinn Snowfield**, who was born and raised in that State and has lived for many years in Cavalier. He studied at the Minneapolis Art School and later studied in New York with the Art Students' League and in the National Academy of Design.

Iceland's Golden Age Literature

A brief Survey of How it Was First Introduced to the World

by HJALMUR F. DANIELSON

Part II

Several scholars, in Iceland and abroad, ably assisted in spreading among their European colleagues knowledge of the Old Icelandic literature, a subject in which many European scholars were keenly interested. In the following short survey room does not permit a complete list of those first in the field. Among the first ones in Iceland who contributed during, and immediately after, Arngrim Jonsson's time, were Bishop Thorlakur Skulason, at Hólar; the great Latin scholar Bishop Brynjolfur Sveinsson of Skálholt, who also collected and sent abroad numerous Old Icelandic manuscripts; the philologist, Gudmundur Andresson, and Rector Runolfur Jonsson. In Denmark: the eminent scholar Prof. Oluf Worm, who played a very important part; and Peder H. Rosen, who, over a long period made a very valuable contribution. In Sweden: Olafur Verelius, Jon Rugman and Olafur Rudneck contributed. Furthermore, in Sweden, an Icelander, Gudmundur Olafsson, was engaged to translate Old Icelandic literature. As already mentioned, these scholars and others of that time, engaged in research and recording of Icelandic literature, could all be called disciples of Arngrim Jonsson the Learned.

Thormod Torfæus was appointed Royal historiographer in Copenhagen in 1667. He translated Old Icelandic literature into Latin, which, however, was never published. Later he was sent as a Royal official to Norway, which

at that time was under Danish rule. He resided on the Stangeland estate in Stavanger Stift, and spent the rest of his life there translating Old Icelandic literature into Latin as well as doing some valuable research work. The only one of his works published was the history of Norway, down to 1387, *Historia Rerum Norwegicarum*, in four volumes, in 1711.

In dealing with the renaissance of Old Icelandic literature, Gjerset, in his History of Iceland lumps together the three writers, Arngrim Jonsson, Thormod Torfæus and Arni Magnusson, as if they belonged to the same period. This may cause confusion in the readers' minds. Arngrim had opened up important avenues of information before the other two were born. He had completed fifty-six years of active work when Torfæus was only fourteen years old, and Arni Magnusson was born ninety-five years later than Arngrim Jonsson. On page 314 in his history, Gjerset states that Torfæus wrote the histories of the Orkney Islands, Greenland and Norway. But, as recorded above, Arngrim had already written books about these countries and the credit for the original compilation of these works must go to him.

Arni Magnusson, (1663-1730), the renowned collector of Old Icelandic manuscripts, was Royal Antiquarian and also private secretary to the Danish historian Thomas Bartholin. He gathered Icelandic manuscripts and literary documents in Iceland and elsewhere. Some of these went to Sweden,

some were lost at sea or by fire in the Royal Library at Copenhagen in 1728, but the rest, a total of about two thousand manuscripts and six thousand documents, are still preserved in the library at Copenhagen.

Grimur Jonsson Thorkelin, (1752-1829), was another noted Icelandic antiquarian. He secured his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Among his works is a translation into Latin of one of the Sagas of Icelanders, *Eyrbyggja Saga*. One of his noteworthy achievements was the saving from destruction of the great old English epic *Beowulf*, the most important single monument of the Anglo-Saxon period. It is an heroic poem of 3182 full lines. In 1786 the only copy of this epic poem was a 1000 A.D. manuscript which for years had lain a-moldering in the library of a 16th century English collector named Sir Robert Bruce Cotton. In 1700 Sir Robert's descendants turned his library over to the government, but in 1731 a good deal of it was destroyed by fire. *Beowulf* emerged scorched and seared, but still no one did anything to preserve what remained. Then it happened that Grimur Jonsson Thorkelin arrived in London on a hunt for some historical data. After hearing about the manuscript by accident, though he did not appreciate its literary importance, he copied it letter by letter. His copy found its way to the Royal Library of Copenhagen. It was among the treasured documents to survive the British bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807, when England attacked Denmark during the Napoleonic war.¹

Owing to the fact that Arngrim Jons-

son, as well as most writers at that time, wrote all his books in Latin, the books had a small circulation. Furthermore, many of these books were not published but were preserved for many years in manuscript form, so that only a few scholars had access to them.. Halliday Sparling states in his introduction to *Wolsunga Saga*, (translated by Eiríkur Magnússon and William Morris and published by the Norreona Society in 1807), "Not before 1770 when Bishop Percy translated Mallett's *Northern Antiquities*, was anything known here of Iceland and its literature. Only within the latter part of the 19th century has it been studied, and little had been done as yet. It is, however, becoming ever clearer, and to an increasing number, how supremely important is Icelandic as a word-hoard to the English-speaking peoples, and that in its legend, song, and story there is a very mine of noble and pleasant beauty and high manhood. That which has been done, one may hope, is but the beginning of a great new birth, that shall give back to our language and literature all that heedlessness and ignorance bid fair for a while to destroy."

The French writer, Paul Henry de Mallett, became intensely interested in *Northern Antiquities*. In 1755 he wrote *L'Histoire Denmarca*. The introduction to this book was translated into English by the eminent writer and antiquarian, Bishop Thomas Percy, (1729-1810). It is among his older works titled: *Northern Antiquities*, published in 1770. Bishop Percy also translated five selections of Ancient Icelandic poetry.

The well known poet and novelist, Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), showed considerable interest in Old Icelandic literature as is evident by the fact that

1. The famed Thorkelin transcript of *Beowulf* was published about three years ago, edited by Professor Kemp Malone, of Johns Hopkins University.

although he was one of the most prolific writers, he devoted a part of his valuable time to translating one of the Sagas of Icelanders, *Eyrbyggja Saga*, (The Eyrdwellers.)¹ This is an abstract made in 1814 from the Latin version translated by Grimur Thor-kelin in 1776.

Many other writers and novelists of the 18th and 19th centuries appear to have been familiar with Icelandic literature, or parts of it, most likely in translations, and have used material from the Sagas in their novels. Thus we find that *The Waif Woman*, by Robert Louis Stevenson, was based on the above mentioned Saga, In 1826 the German author, Friedrich Heinrich Karl Fouque wrote a novel in three volumes which was based on *Gunnlaugs Saga Ormstungu*. The novel *Helga Und Gunnlaug*, by Bleibtreu and Ezardi, of Hanover, published in 1875, is based on the same Saga.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century an increasing number of eminent scholars showed marked interest in Old Icelandic literature. However, they realized that in order to secure full benefit from this literature, it was necessary to learn the Icelandic language. Consequently scholars in many lands learned the language and translated Old Icelandic literature, while others used it as source material. As already indicated the first translations were from Latin. The first English author to translate Icelandic verse from the original was William Herbert, in 1804.

The following paragraphs will illustrate the views of several eminent scholars who have expressed their appreciation of Old Icelandic literature and language. Most of them acquired

a thorough knowledge of the language.

Thomas Carlyle, (1795-1881), the eminent Scottish essayist, historian and miscellaneous writer, says in his book *Heroes and Hero Worship*: "Much would have been lost had Iceland not burst up from the sea—not been discovered by the Northmen! The old Norse poets were, many of them, natives of Iceland . . . The primary characteristics of the old Northland mythology I find to be impersonation of the visible workings of nature—earnest, simple recognition of the working of physical nature, as a thing wholly miraculous, stupendous and devine. What we now lecture of as science, they wondered at, and fell down in awe before, as religion. . . Indeed our English blood, too, in good part is Danish-Norse,—rather, at bottom, Danish and Norse and Saxon have no distinction, except a superficial one as a heathen and christian, or the like. But all over our Island we are mingled largely wiht Danes proper—from the incessant invasions there were; and this of course, in a great proportion along the east coast; and greatest of all, as I find in the north country. From the Humber upward, all over Scotland, the speech of the common people is still in a singular degree Icelandic; its Germanish has still a peculiar Norse tinge. They too are Normans, Northmen. . ."

Sir George Webb Dasent, (1817-1896), was born in India, but he secured all his higher education in England. For four years he was private secretary of the English Ambassador to Sweden, and on his return to England he was, from 1845 to 1870, an Assistant Editor of the London Times, and from 1852 to 1865 he was Professor of English literature at King's College, London. He was appointed a Civil Commission-

¹. See Encyclopedia Americana Vol. 14, page 634B. Also Halldor Hermannsson's *Islandica* vol. 1 and vol. XXIV.

er in 1870, which position he held for twenty-five years. During his stay in Stockholm, Sweden, Sir Dasent associated with scholars who were studying Old Icelandic literature. Moreover, during his travels in Germany, he became acquainted with the philologist and fairy tale writer, Jacob Ludwig Grimm, (1785-1863), who aroused Dasent's interest in the old literature of the Teutonic peoples. Sir Dasent decided to learn the Icelandic language. He learned it the hard way by translating Rask's Icelandic grammar and *Gylfaginning*, from Snorri Sturluson's Edda, which was published in 1842, two years before Samuel Laing published his translation of *Heimskringla*, three large volumes. For eighteen years Dasent worked in his spare time at the translation of *Njáls Saga*. This work under the title *The Story of Burnt Njál* was published in two volumes in 1861. Dasent also did some work on the Cleasby-Vigfusson Icelandic-English dictionary.

Sir George Dasent travelled extensively in Iceland in 1861 and again in 1862, accompanied by the Icelandic poet Dr. Grimur Thomsen and a group of English scholars. Among Old Icelandic literature which he translated later is *The Story of Gisli the Outlaw*, (*Gísli Saga Súrssonar*), which was published in 1866.

Sir Dasent's comments on the Old Icelandic classics are, in part, as follows: "Putting aside the study of Old Norse, (Icelandic), for the sake of its magnificent literature, and considering it merely as an accessory help for the English student, we shall find it of immense advantage, not only in tracing the rise of words and idioms, but still more in clearing up many dark points in our early history; in fact so highly do I value it in this respect, that I cannot imagine it pos-

sible to write a satisfactory history of the Anglo-Saxon period without a thorough knowledge of the Old Norse literature."

Friedrich Max Muller, (1823-1900), was born in Germany. In 1868 he became a Professor of comparative philology at the Oxford University, England, and was made a Privy Councillor in 1896. He was a very prolific writer, his greatest single effort being the editing of the "Sacred Books of the East", *Rig Veda*, a series of oriental scriptures in an English version to which he contributed three volumes. This Ancient literature, was, like the Old Icelandic literature, committed to memory for centuries before it was written down in that ancient language, Sanskrit. Max Muller, as he is called, was a pre-eminent authority in Sanskrit, and he wrote many books on the science of languages and related subjects. His article on Comparative Mythology has been highly praised. In his second volume of *Chips From a German Work Shop* he makes the following remarks: "There is, after Anglo-Saxon, no language, no literature, no mythology so full of interest for the elucidation of the earliest history of the race, which now inhabits the British Isles as the Icelandic. Nay, in one respect Icelandic beats every other dialect of the great Teutonic family of speech, not excepting Anglo-Saxon and old High German and Gothic. It is in Icelandic alone that we find complete remains of the genuine Teutonic heathendom. Gothic, as a language, is more ancient than Icelandic; but the only literary work which we possess in Gothic is a translation of the Bible. The Anglo-Saxon literature, with the exception of *Beowulf*, is Christian. The old heroes of the Niebelunge, such as we find them represented in the Suabian epic, have been converted into church-going

knights; whereas, in the ballads of the Elder Edda, Sigurd and Brynhild appear before us in their full pagan grandeur, holding nothing sacred but their love, and defying all laws, human and divine, in the name of that one almighty passion. The Icelandic contains the key to many a riddle in the English language and to many a mystery in the English character. Though the Old Norse (Icelandic) is but a dialect of the same language which the Angles and Saxons brought to Britain, though the Norman blood is the same blood that ebbs and flows in every German heart, yet there is an accent of defiance in the rugged northern speech, and a spring of daring in the throbbing northern heart, which marks the northman wherever he appears, whether in Iceland or in Sicily, whether on the Rhine or on the Thames. . ."

Daniel Willard Fiske, (1831-1904), was Professor of Northern European languages, and a librarian at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, from 1868 to 1883. He was undoubtedly the most learned Northern scholar in America. He spent several years in the Scandinavian countries and was an enthusiastic admirer and great friend of Iceland, and valued highly the Old Icelandic literature. He was a lifelong devotee of the advancement of civilization and culture. When he died he bequeathed to the Cornell University his library, including the Icelandic section which contained 8600 books, pamphlets and documents, which at present number 25,000 items, called "The Fiske Icelandic Collection". He also bequeathed a fund of more than half a million dollars for the uses and purposes of the whole library. He further bequeathed to the University a special fund of five thousand dollars, the interest of which is to be used for

the publication of an annual volume relating to Iceland and the Icelandic collection in the library. Of these thirty-seven volumes have been published to date under the title **Islandica**. Professor Fiske owned the most up-to-date library on the game of chess, which he bequeathed to the tiny, isolated Island of **Grímsey**, which belongs to Iceland. This island has a population of around seventy people who are noted for their interest in the game of chess. Professor Fiske was given special distinction by King Hubert of Italy in 1892, and also by King Christian IX of Denmark and Iceland, at that time.

Professor Fiske made the following comment on the Old Icelandic literature: "It is not necessary to dwell on the value of Icelandic to those who desire to investigate the early history of the Teutonic races. The religious belief of our remote ancestors, and very many of the primitive legal and social customs, some of which still influence the daily life of the people, find their clearest and often the only elucidation in the so called **Eddic** and **Skaldic** lays, and the Sagas. The same writings form the sole sources of Scandinavian history before the fourteenth century, and they not infrequently shed a welcome ray on the obscure annals of the British Islands, and several continental nations. They furnish, moreover, an almost unique example of the modern literature which is completely indigenous. The Old Icelandic literature, besides which the literature of the early Teutonic dialects—Gothic, Old High German, Saxon, Frisian, and Anglo-Saxon, are as a drop to a bucket of water, developed itself out of actual life of the people under little or no extraneous influence. In this respect it deserves the careful study of every student of

letters. For the English-speaking race especially there is nowhere, so near home, a field promising to the scholar so rich a harvest. The few translations, or attempted translations, which are to be found in English, give merely a faint idea of the treasures of antique wisdom and sublime poetry which exist in the Eddic lays, or of the quaint simplicity, dramatic action, and striking realism which characterize the historic Sagas. Nor is the modern literature of the language, with the rich and abundant stores of folk-lore, unworthy of regard".

Dr. Rasmus B. Anderson, (1846-1936), was a Professor of Scandinavian languages at the University of Wisconsin, (U.S.A.), and at one time Minister to Denmark. He was the author of *America Not Discovered by Columbus*, *Viking Tales of the North*, and *Norse Mythology or The Religion of Our Forefathers*. He was editor of the deluxe, Royal edition of the *Norroena, Anglo-Saxon Classics*, fifteen large volumes. In his book *Norse Mythology*, he says: ". . . In the next place, that is, next after the English and Anglo-Saxon, we must study German, Meso-Gothic and the Scandinavian languages, and especially Icelandic, which is the only living key to the history of middle ages, and to the Old Norse literature. It is the only language now in use in almost unchanged form, through a knowledge of which we can read the literature of the Middle ages. We must by no means forget that we have Teutonic antiquities to which we stand in an entirely different and far closer relation than we do to Greece and Rome. And the Norsemen have in Iceland an Old literature, which the scholar must of necessity be familiar with in order to comprehend the history of the middle ages. . . The more vividly the truth will flash

upon our minds, that the Greek and the Icelandic are two silver-haired veterans, who hold in their hands two golden keys,—the one to unlock the treasures of ancient time, the other those of the middle ages; the one to the treasures of the south and the other those of the north of Europe. . ."

Dame Bertha Surtees Phillpotts, — (1877-1932), was born at Bedford, England, the daughter of James Surtees Phillpotts, Headmaster of Bedford Grammar School. In 1898, at Cambridge, she was awarded first class (French and German) in the medieval and modern languages. Between 1901 and 1913 she was acquiring, extending, and deepening her knowledge of Scandinavian languages, history archaeology and literature. In 1911 she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquity of Copenhagen.¹ In 1913 she was elected first lady Carlisle fellow of Somerset College, Oxford. When in Stockholm, Sweden, during the first world war she was appointed Clerical Assistant to His Majesty's Legation and she also acted as private secretary to the British Minister, and was awarded the O.B.E. in 1918. She was Principal of Westfield College, Hampstead 1919-1921, and of her own College 1922 to 1925. Then she was elected a research fellow for one year, and finally became a lecturer and Director of Scandinavian Studies and Head of the Department of other languages at the University of Cambridge. She was honored with the title D.B.E. in 1929;—was the only woman member of the Statutory Commission for the University of Cambridge (1923-1927); and Statutory member of the University of London (1926-1928).

Dame Phillpotts was recognized as an authority on Scandinavian subjects.

1. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquity of Copenhagen was founded in 1825.

She journeyed six times to Iceland between 1908 and 1914 and worked in libraries and visited archives in Stockholm and Copenhagen and a number of German Cities. She had planned especially a history of Iceland for which notes are extant. Among her writings are: **Kindred and Clan**, **The Elder Edda**, **Scandinavian Drama**, and **Edda and Saga**, which was her last book published a year before she passed away in 1932.

In her introduction to **Edda and Saga**, Dame Phillpotts wrote in part as follows: "The Eddic heroic poems represent the ancient thought and experiences of the race to which we belong. Without their help we cannot understand the attitude to life of our own forefathers. The ideas underlying them were the common heritage of the English and Scandinavian peoples. To a great extent they were the common heritage of most of the Teutonic peoples, for a similar attitude to life can be traced in German stories, especially in the **Nibelungenlied**, which is a piece of the ancient tradition reshaped in the age of Chivalry. . . There is another point which we must bear in mind in considering **Edda and Saga**. The tradition is not narrow or insular or provincial. But neither are the authors, whether Norwegian or Icelanders. In the period which saw the creation of much of this literature, in the form in which we have it, that is from, the eighth to the thirteenth century, the Norse language became current over a large part of Europe. It was spoken, with small local differences, in the whole of Scandinavia, in considerable area in England, Scotland and Ireland, in part of France (for a time at least), on the southern and eastern sides of the Baltic, as far south as the great Swedish Kingdom centered in

Kiev, the mother of Russian cities.¹ It became a recognized language in Constantinople, for it was the speech of the Emperor's bodyguard. It was probably used by traders on the shores of the Caspian, . . . Its limit westward was no nearer than the coast of Massachusetts, for it was the first European language to be spoken in the new world. . . Old Norse literature, then, belongs to a time when Norse was one of the most widely spread language of Europe."

Dr. Halldor Harmannsson, former Curator of the **Icelandic Fiske Collection**, at Cornell University, recorded in his **Islandica**, volume XXIII, 1934, a list of the translations of Old Icelandic literature, which shows that the Elder Edda and parts of the Prose Edda, have been translated into thirteen languages. It further shows that a large selection of the Sagas of Icelanders has been translated into from six to ten languages. Almost all the translations have been done by non-Icelanders who have perfectly mastered the language. In volume XXIV of **Islandica**, 1935, he gives a listing, full twenty-four pages, of the names of writers, and their works, where Old Icelandic literature has been used as subject matter or source material. During the period from 1908 to 1935 seventy-five percent of those who have used Old Icelandic literature as source material or subject matter are non-Icelandic.

Since the turn of the century the Ice-

1. According to Jon Jonsson's **Vikingasaga** (1914), which is based on Snorri Sturluson's **Heimskringla** and the **Chronicles of Nestor**, this kingdom was founded by northern Vikings in 862 and gradually became the largest independent nation in Europe. It was all conquered by the Mongol hordes in 1240 except the Principality of Novgorod, which had separated from it in 1150 and was an independent Trade Republic until about 1480 when it was united with Russia.

landic language has been taught in many universities. Some of these are: Oxford, Cambridge, London, Leeds and Wales, in the British Isles. It is taught in many universities in all the Scandinavian countries, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and others, as well as in several universities in the United States of America. In some of these educational institutions it is called Norse language or classed with Germanic languages. A Chair in Icelandic literature and language was established at the University of Manitoba in 1951. This was made possible through a fund of more than \$200,000 to which the descendants of Icelanders all over America contributed.

A plan is under way to publish the Old Icelandic Classics in Edinburgh, Scotland, by the publishing house of Nelson and Sons. The Committee which has been chosen to accomplish this project, consists of eight members in Britain, four in Iceland and one in Denmark. The British group is headed by the eminent scholar Sir William Craigie, former Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford, who is widely known in connection with Icelandic literature. Five British Universities are represented. Under the arrangement made, a combined edition will be made in such a manner that each

page in Icelandic will face the page of English translation. The plan is to publish the Sagas of Icelanders, the Poetic Edda and the Prose Edda, Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* and other literature which especially concerns people of the Teutonic races.

From the brief survey contained in the above article, it is quite evident that scholars and writers of many lands, realize the cultural value of the Old Icelandic literature and language. This is further proved by the fact that it is included in the curriculum of many of the most important universities. It is generally conceded that it is of great importance to all people of the Teutonic races, and also that it is their common heritage.

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 Also some valuable information supplied by Johann S. Hannesson, Curator of the Icelandic Collection at Cornell University.

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At the University of Iceland

by LILIA EYLANDS

This past winter, I had the privilege of studying at the University of Iceland as recipient of one of the Icelandic government scholarships awarded each year to students of six foreign countries.

It was an experience I shall never forget—one which educated, broadened and impressed not only me, but all the other foreign students of my acquaintance. There were six of us: Frank Bullivant from England, Gunter Kotz from Germany, Jorgen Rischel from Denmark, Antonio Adsera Martorell from Spain, Paula Vermeiden from Holland, and myself. There were also two other students, Ute Jakobs-hagen from Germany and Jose Antonio Fernandez Romero (known as Romero) from Spain, both of whom had been in Iceland for more than two years and spoke the language almost perfectly. They had taken an examination in their studies of Icelandic Language and Literature, and both went home this spring to seek positions as professors in these subjects in their home universities.

The rest of us had rather a difficult time of it at first, as we had no language in common. As a result we babbled together in a mixture of French, German, Icelandic and English, and no matter what language something was said in, it had to be translated into another for someone's benefit. The Spaniard was in the worst position, as he understood only Spanish and a little French. We all made terrible blunders at some time or another, though, and often enjoyed a good laugh on ourselves as well as others.

It wasn't too long, however, before we were chatting together in Icelandic, not of the purest and most beautiful quality to be sure, but at least we understood each other.

The purpose of this Scholarship was to learn the language sufficiently to speak it and to be able to read the literature of both ancient and modern times. We attended, therefore, grammar classes with Prof. Halldor Hall-dorsson, but from there on we chose our own subjects of study, and attended as we could. Most of us attended classes in Icelandic Sagas, with Prof. Einar O. Sveinsson, and classes in the History of Icelandic Literature (in the latter centuries) with Prof. Steingrímur Thorsteinsson. We each chose, besides these, a variety of subjects, such as Norwegian, Greek, Gothic and Theology.

The student life in Iceland is very different from that which we are used to on this side. They lead a much freer and calmer life in many ways, than we do. The students don't have to pay tuition fees because the University is supported by the Government, and therefore they don't have the awful financial pinches which are all too common here among students. They have relatively few classes, none of which they are compelled to attend, and can work and study at the same time without difficulty. Their examinations given twice yearly, in January and in May and June, are spread out, and although they are probably much more extensive and thorough than ours, because the students have oral as well as written examinations, they

don't have the frenzied panic and pressure of ten examinations in eight days, as we sometimes do. They also have several weeks holiday to study before exams begin. It is really a much more sensible system, and I firmly believe they retain their knowledge better than our students do.

Their student administration and social life is also rather different from ours. The student council elections are greatly influenced by political ties, and consequently there are several political clubs and debating clubs. Unfortunately, it seems that these are much more active than their athletic club, in spite of the beautiful gymnasium at their disposal.

There are numerous dances and student feasts during the year, but the high spot of the academic social life is December 1st, which marks the anniversary of the agreement between Denmark and Iceland in 1918, regarding the sovereignty of Iceland. In the residence at Gamligarður, there were dances for the students once a month or so, and then each of the two dormitories, Nýjgarði and Gamligarði, held their private residence parties once a year. Each dormitory had a social committee as part of their governing councils, which looked after amusements such as ping pong, pool, buying records for the music lovers, and taking care of the libraries.

The students of both residences had their meals together in the dining room at Gamligarði. As is usually the case in most institutions, the food was not always first class, at least not according to the type we are used to on this continent. However, it was reasonably priced in comparison with the exorbitant prices of meals elsewhere in Reykjavík. Approximately one hundred students took their meals in the dining room four times daily.

Apart from the yearly grant from the government, the university makes money for extras in several ways. They own and operate a local movie theatre which they allow students to frequent gratis with a special certificate. Profits from this business provide scholarships for Icelandic students to study abroad, and also pay for books and periodicals published by the University. They also create funds for the erection of new campus buildings, such as laboratories, and homes for the staff, by running legalized national lotteries.

Apart from the University life, living in Reykjavík was most pleasant. We foreign students enjoyed so much attending all the plays in the National Theatre, visiting all the art galleries and displays, and places of interest in general, but probably most of all, we loved to wander from book shop to book shop and browse through the fabulous collection of high priced books. Most of us managed to collect a few essentials, however, by teaching our native language privately for a small fee a few hours a week. Besides the Stefan Einarsson Grammar, and dictionaries, our most valued books were of course the sagas, then the poets, such as Einar Benediktsson, Davíð Stefánsson, Jónas Hallgrímsson, something of Sigurður Nordal's and as much as we could afford of Laxness.

We were often invited out as a group to such functions as Germanica, a club for German people in Iceland, and Alliance Francaise, a club for French people and lovers of French. We were also invited to private homes as for example to the home of Magnus and Barbara Arnason, well known painters, and sculptors, and to our good friends and guardians away from home, Birgir Thorlacius, secretary in the department of Education, and his

gracious wife Sigríður. The last outstanding group invitation was to be present at the National Theatre during a programme given in honor of the King and Queen of Denmark. It was indeed one of the most festive occasions of the season. Altogether, we met many interesting people, and they were all most hospitable and interested in our welfare.

For my part, there were three things which I did not miss at all while away from home. One was television, the second was our numbing advertisements, and the third was our harsh winter weather. Granted we had a long period of darkness in December when our lights were off between about 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. but the mildness of the weather made up for it tenfold. There was frost for about one month and wild wind storms with rain once in a while, but imagine being still able to pick flowers in December and then having the crocuses sprout in the middle of March! At one point this year Reykjavík was the hottest capital city in Europe, a fact almost incredible to people who know little about Iceland and the soothing Gulf Stream effect.

The young people with whom I be-

came acquainted while in Iceland were very interested in the U.S.A. and Canada and especially in their Western Icelandic cousins. It is regrettable that there is no closer contact between us and that the third and fourth generations on this side know so little of the language of their forefathers. And yet, we are so fortunate here in Manitoba to have the Icelandic Chair in our University, and a fine library at our disposal. It would be a wonderful incentive to students on both sides to learn of each other's culture and language if some sort of yearly scholarship of exchange could be arranged between a student of Iceland and some American or Canadian student of Icelandic parentage or background to study for at least one school year. Let's hope that sometime in the not too distant future, such a plan can be worked out.

We owe many thanks to Prof. Finn-bogi Guðmundsson who is leaving us this summer for Iceland. He has worked so diligently to make the first years of the Icelandic Chair successful, and done all he could to foster interest in the Icelandic courses amongst the students. His efforts on our behalf will long be remembered and appreciated.

Bare is the back without brother behind it. —Njála

Icelandic is one of the oldest living European languages. The same tongue was spoken throughout Scandinavia when Iceland was colonized at the end of the IXth and the beginning of the Xth Centuries. It is interesting that the language has retained its ancient vocabulary almost without change in the words or inflections, even with comparatively little change in pronunciation, and the language of today is of almost unequalled purity.

In spite of its primitive character, it blends itself to the formation of new words to express new activities and ideas.

★

Once when certain chieftains had come to Hvammur to serve Sturla with summons, he asked if Sæmundur of Oddi was among them. "I guess I am here", said Sæmundur. Sturla was quick to answer: "I am sure you are far too intelligent a man not to know whether it is you or someone else."

THE COVER VERSE

The cover verse is a selection from the many popular lyric poems of **Steingrímur Thorsteinsson**, (1831-1913) one of the later nineteenth century men of letters of Iceland. This little gem has been set to music by more than one of Iceland's composers. The song usually selected is the one by the late Sigvaldi S. Kaldalóns, one of Iceland's leading composers. It is equally a favorite among Icelandic people on both sides of the Atlantic. Incidentally, one of the ambitions of The Icelandic Canadian is to be able to publish some of the beautiful music to which Icelandic poems have been set together with the original poems and translations into English.

SWANSONG ON THE MOORLANDS

Alone, upon a summer's eve,
I rode the dreary moorlands.
No more the way seemed bleak and long
For sudden strains of lovely song
Were borne across the moorlands.

The mountains glowed with rosy light.
—From far across the moorlands
And like a sacred interlude
It fell upon my solitude,
That song upon the moorlands.

It thrilled my soul with sweet response,
That song upon the moorlands.
As in a dream I rode ahead—
And knew not how the moments fled,
With swans upon the moorlands.

The translation of the poem selected this time is by Jakobina Johnson and is one in which she has succeeded especially well in translating not only the words and train of thought but the spirit of the poem, the feeling of calm comfort which the song of the swans gave to the author as he passed over the barren waste.

It is sometimes said, and not without reason, that it is impossible to translate the soul of a poem. But in this instance we venture the opinion that for smoothly flowing lines of lyric poetry expressing the inmost thoughts of the poet the translation is equal to the original. The two follow and it is left to the reader to decide for himself.

SVANASÖNGUR Á HEIÐI

Eg reið um sumaraftan einn
á eyðilegri heiði;
þá styttist leiðin löng og ströng,
því ljúfan heyrði' eg svanasöng,
já, svanasöng á heiði.

Á fjöllum roði fagur skein,
og fjær og nær úr geimi
að eyrum bar sem englahjóm,
í einverunnar helgidóm,
þann svanasöng á heiði.

Svo undurblítt eg aldrei hef
af ómi töfrazt neinum;
í vökudraum eg veg minn reið
og vissi' ei, hvernig tíminn leið
við svanasöng á heiði.

AN INNOVATION

The readers who have enjoyed the poems from which the cover verses have been selected, both the originals and the translations — and many readers have so expressed themselves — find their enjoyment not only in the thought of the poet but also in the art of the translator. These readers are lovers of poetry — of beautiful inspiring thoughts expressed in the loftiest form of language.

It has occurred to the Editorial Board that both enjoyment and profit would result if the process, as carried out in the past, were reversed at times

and selections from poetry clothed in English language in the original were dressed in new and perhaps refreshing Icelandic garb. Needless to say that would not apply to cover verses. As an experiment one such poem, with a theme of universal appeal, is selected. The original "Is Anybody Happier" is by the American author F. Ralph Hollands. The translator, Paul Bjarnason of Vancouver, has been equally as skillful as Jakobina Johnson in maintaining the rhythmic form and passing the thought from the one language to the other.

IS ANYBODY HAPPIER

Is anybody happier
because you passed his way?
Does anyone remember
that you spoke to him today?
The day is almost over
and its toiling time is through.
Is there anyone to utter
a kindly word for you?

Can you say tonight, in parting
with the day that's slipping fast,
That you helped a single brother
of the many that you passed?
Is a single heart rejoicing
over what you did or said?
Does a man whose hopes were fading
now with courage look ahead?

Did you waste the day, or use it;
was it well or poorly spent?
Did you leave a trail of kindness,
or a scar of discontent?
As you close your eyes in slumber,
do you think that God will say
You have earned one more tomorrow
by the work you did today?

ER NOKKUR SÆLLI

Varð nokkur sála sælli við
að sjá þig fara hjá?
Kom nokkurt orð, er viðtal vakti,
vörum þínum frá?
Við sólarlag, er lúin þjóð
að lokum náttar sig,
Er nokkur til, sem treystir sér
að tala vel um þig?

Og færðu kvíðalaus að kveldi
kvatt þann dag, sem fer,
Og sagt þú hafir huggað einn
í hóp, sem mætti þér?
Fékk nokkurt hjarta hressing við
þá hvöt er vékstu því;
Og gafstu bróður stundar-styrk
að stefna fram á ný?

Varð dagsverk þitt til einskis, eða
iðjusemi háð?
Er slóð þín gist af góðvild,
eða giftuleysi stráð?
Og nær þú leggur augun aftur
ætli Drottinn hvíslir þér,
Þú eigir dyggur enn til góða
annan dag að þjóna sér?

Farewell Addresses to Prof. Finnbogi Gudmundsson

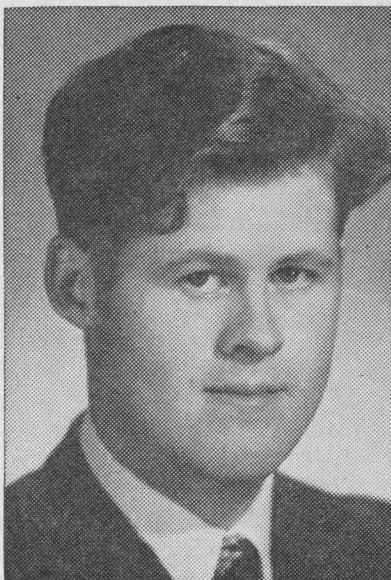
Delivered at a farewell gathering for him held in the First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, May 29th, 1956

I.

I have been chosen by the Icelandic Canadian Club to bring greetings and best wishes to Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson tonight, on the eve of his departure for Iceland. It was thought appropriate that I should do this as member of the Club and also of the Magazine Board, for Professor Finnbogi has been associated with both phases of our club's activities.

This gathering for Professor Finnbogi is on a personal note, but it is also for him as Professor and a member of the community of some prominence. My thoughts then inevitably sweep back over the events leading to the foundation of the Icelandic Chair and his coming here. In 1884 a young man, Frímánn B. Anderson, held aloft the ideal of an Icelandic school. One year later the Reverend Jon Bjarnason, donated the sum of one hundred dollars, his honorarium for his first year as editor of *Sameiningin*, to be the nucleus of a fund for an Icelandic school. In 1901, a chair in Icelandic was established at Wesley College, with the Reverend Fridrik J. Bergmann as lecturer. This chair was maintained till 1927. From 1913 to 1940 the Jon Bjarnason Academy functioned. Then, in the forties and at the turn of the mid-century there was the drive that led to the founding of the Icelandic Chair at the University of Manitoba. The work of Professor Finnbogi is an episode in the story of the Chair. It is the story of a vision and a cherished ideal.

Tonight I recall the first time I met Professor Finnbogi. By chance it



Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson

was the day of his arrival, or the day after. I remember his cheery smile and his firm handclasp, which are typical of him. He was embarked on a conspicuously important undertaking. Tonight I recall, too, the large gathering held in this church a little later to welcome him to the community.

Professor Finnbogi has been associated to some extent with the Icelandic Canadian Club. At the annual banquet of the Club the first winter of his residence here, he gave a very interesting address, "A Chest of Books", which was later published in the Icelandic Canadian magazine. He has attended several meetings of the Club and has contributed to the programs at meetings and to the magazine.

Professor Finnbogi has made many friends in the community, but Ice-

landic scholar as he is and steeped in Icelandic history and literature, he has made special friends among the older generation, who cherish their memories of Iceland. When talking to them, their harps have been tuned together in speaking of Iceland and things Icelandic.

Professor Finnbogi has been a standard bearer in the community and as such he has been a person of some prominence. He has held aloft the Icelandic flag. This is in keeping with his background and his position with the Chair. His work in this field will be missed.

For us in Canada, the magnetic pole is on the Boothia peninsula. For Professor Finnbogi it is in Iceland. To this magnetic pole he is being attracted and drawn. He returns to Iceland with our best wishes for personal happiness and an illustrious career.

Þakk fyrir góða viðkynningu og far heill.

Wilhelm Kristjanson

II

In view of the fact that Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, the Chairman of the Foundation Committee of the Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba is unable to be present this evening, it is my pleasure to be given the opportunity to express to Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson the thanks and appreciation of our Committee to him for his able and diligent services rendered in laying the foundation of the Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba.

Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson was recommended to the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba by Dr. Alexander Jóhannesson, Rector of the University of Iceland, as being the most suitable educationist

then available in Iceland for the organization and setting up of the Department of Icelandic at the University of Manitoba; as a result he arrived in this city late in November, 1951, to undertake and carry out this mission. At this stage, I wish to state to you, Professor Finnbogi, that it is the considered opinion of the members of our committee and that of Professor W. J. Waines, the Dean of the Arts and Science faculty of the University of Manitoba, that you have performed excellent work in the organization of your Department and in the supervising of the setting up of the Icelandic Library at the University of Manitoba, which as we know is one of the larger libraries of its kind outside of Iceland, and it is being added to each year.

We are all aware of the fact that Professor Finnbogi has during his short stay with us been very active in his efforts to acquaint the Canadian and American people of Icelandic origin and descent with the cultural aspects of the Icelandic language and literature, and has journeyed far and wide to all of the centers of Canada and the United States where there are Icelandic settlements of any consequence to spread his gospel. Our Committee wishes to express its appreciation to Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson for this missionary work which is so essential towards the eventual success of the Icelandic Department at the University of Manitoba.

At this stage I wish to point out to Professor Finnbogi and those assembled here this evening that we must not be discouraged by the fact that the students who have taken the course in Icelandic have been few in number, as I remember being a student in the Icelandic course at Wesley College in the year 1915, when the

late Reverend Fridrik J. Bergman was the Professor in Icelandic and there were only three of us, and that is forty-one years ago, when Icelandic was spoken in all the homes of our mothers and fathers. The Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba was not established through the large monetary contribution of Americans and Canadians of Icelandic origin and descent for the sole purpose of giving tuition in the living language, but to assist the English Department in providing the essential Division of Old Norse which, as we know, is the Icelandic language and is required in most universities which confer a Ph.D. Degree in English. Dr. Sidney Smith, President of the University of Toronto, has stated that in the establishment of the Chair in Icelandic Language and Literature, the University of Manitoba would be the only University in Canada which

would have the facilities to provide the necessary means for a student to obtain a Ph.D. Degree in English, with emphasis on the old Germanic background.

We all regret to see Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson leaving the University of Manitoba at this time, but we wish to extend to him our heartfelt thanks for all the efforts he has expended in organizing this new Icelandic Department at the University of Manitoba, and acquainting his fellow citizens of Icelandic origin and descent of the cultural values of their heritage.

May the University of Manitoba be fortunate enough to obtain another educationist of the same calibre, capability and drive of our esteemed friend Professor Finnbogi. We do not bid you goodbye but merely Au Revoir.

Arni G. Eggertson

Artist and Writer Honored by Iceland

As reported in the Autumn issue of this magazine, **Emil Walters** went to Iceland last summer to paint historic sites pertaining to the Vinland sagas. He painted the place of Eirik the Red in Hukadal, Stykkishólmi. Glaumbæ, the sagastead of Thorfinnur Karlsefni and his wife Guðriður; the place where Guðriður founded a nunnery, and other pictures. According to experts, the paintings that the artist brought back with him are exceptionally fine; "so strong, yet so tender and gay."

The United States Defence Department flew Mr. Walters over to Greenland on May 28, where he will paint the ruins of the Icelandic settlements, also the modern Danish towns and the unique aspects of land, sea and sky in that part of the world.

Mr. Walters was commissioned by the State Department of U.S.A. to do this work. He was recently honored by a substantial monetary grant from the Icelandic government "for painting Iceland's historical sites". His wife, Thorstina Jackson Walters also received a grant from Iceland in recognition of her literary efforts on behalf of the land of her ancestors; she has been contributing articles about Iceland to newspapers and magazines for over thirty years and her **Modern Sagas** received very fine reviews in newspapers and magazines all the way from Boston to San Francisco, as well as in Canada. — Emile and Thorstina Walters deserve this honor that Iceland bestowed upon them.

Research Professors in Biosystematics



Dr. Áskell Löve

The noted botanists, Dr. Áskell Löve and his wife, Dr. Doris Löve joined the staff of the university of Manitoba in 1951, he as an associate professor of botany, she as a curator of the botanical collection. Their eminence in the botanical field has now been recognized; they have accepted an invitation to become research professors in Biosystematics at the large Institut Botanique of the French Université de Montreal, which is situated in the famous Montreal Botanical Garden.

The biosystematics project, the first of its kind in Canada and the second in North America, is supported jointly by the University and by the National Research Council. It continues and enlarges the investigations and research Drs. Löve have been working on since 1939, first in Sweden, then in Iceland, and later in Manitoba.

Biosystematics is a new branch of science studying evolution from the



Dr. Doris Löve

viewpoint of taxonomy, ecology and cytogenetics. It started with some experiments in France at the beginning of the century, when Dr. C. Bonnier transplanted some lowland plants to alpine localities, and vice versa. A quarter of a century ago the Swedish geneticist Dr. G. Turesson added these experiments to the methods of genetics and between 1930 and 1940 they were expanded very much by the California team of Drs. I Clausen, D. D. Kech and W. Hiesey. Drs. Löve added to these investigations the methods of pure cytology, and have made several contributions to this new science, published in a number of scientific papers. More than twenty of these papers are based on work performed in Manitoba since 1951.

The biosystematics team in Montreal includes some other scientists and graduate students. Although the work

will mainly be based on the study of the evolution of the eastern American flora, it will also include investigations into the relationship between this flora and that of Iceland and western Europe, and also that of eastern Asia

and western North America. The experimental work will not be confined to Montreal but will extend to stations in the Gaspé peninsula, lowlands and highlands, in the Laurentian Mountains and in the Arctic. —I. J.

“Childhood Days”

by BONNIE JOHNSON

It is sunset and I am back on the farm of my early childhood, the days when life consisted of love, laughter and happiness. How I love going back there today!

To the west the sun is sinking into her bed of glorious colors, just above the trees, and I must go for a walk towards it. The bumblebees in the clover at my feet scare me to a trot, the bright red cranberries beg to be eaten, a patch of yellow daisies reaches out to be picked and the noises of the living woods fill the air.

The sweet scent of flowers pervades as I linger along a bushy path, a cobweb spreads across my face and a twig snaps underfoot. Thus, I walk, lost in dreams, entranced by the perfection of it all.

Suddenly a bell is heard, ringing lazily through the stillness. I remember why I came and with great effort aim quickly for the tinkle. Into an opening where the reed-filled slough is bordered by stooping old willows I go. There they are! The cows are wading into the coolness for a drink or relaxing in a leisurely, unconcerned manner (as only a cow can). Soon though they awaken and they must proceed.

The hum of motors fills the air; the milking machine, the pumping machine, the separating machine. The calves moo for their meal as do the

pigs grunt, the dogs bark, the cats meow and the young horse whinnies. There is bustle within the big and the pleasant house too. Dinner smells fill my nostrils and arouse my stomach.

Then with dusk, the quietness returns as the sun, disappearing behind the silhouetted oak, leaves only the gorgeous red and gold of her coverlet. Farther east the pale and jealous moon looks with envy on the glory of the sun, watching it vanish as the sky brings out of her blue velvet, a host of sparkling diamonds.

I must to bed, for tomorrow the dawn comes soon. Till then I can say my childhood prayers and let mother tuck me in to dream of puppies and airplane and candy coated Easter Eggs, and.

The annual Leif Erikson Day Festival was held in Los Angeles Saturday, October 8. The stage setting for the program was a Viking ship anchored to Thule Stone in a typical Vinland setting, simulating landings of the Vikings with Leif Erikson in full dress of the year 1000 A.D. Mr. Niel Thor took the part of Leif Erikson. Another Iclander, Consul Stanley T. Olafson was introduced to the gathering as were the consuls of the other Scandinavian countries.

Manitoba Professor Wins Recognition

Dr. Tryggvi Julius Oleson, associate professor of history at the University of Manitoba, has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. The Guggenheim Foundation of New York awards these fellowships "to men and women who have already demonstrated unusual capacity for productive scholarship", to continue their studies in a specialized field at an American University. This prize, of \$4000.00 for one year, is the highest award available to Canadian scholars. Dr. Oleson has elected to continue his specialized study of the period of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) at Harvard University. In addition to the above, Dr. Oleson has received a Nuffield Traveling scholarship. This is awarded by the Nuffield Foundation of England, on a basis similar to the Guggenheim Fellowship, to enable a scholar to visit libraries and universities in Europe. Each of these awards is a prize much coveted by advanced students; to win both in one year is an outstanding achievement.

Dr. Tryggvi Oleson was born at Glenboro, Manitoba. His father, G. J. Oleson, was for many years editor of the Glenboro Gazette; he is an outstanding example of a man who has acquired a wide education without the benefit of attendance at school. Tryggvi took his high school studies at Glenboro; his B.A. and M.A. degrees at the University of Manitoba; his Ph. D. degree at the University of Toronto. His doctor's thesis, "The Witenagemot in the Reign of Edward the Confessor" (published by the Oxford University Press), aroused much interest; it was reviewed with appreciation by eminent historians in leading British journals.



Dr. Tryggvi Julius Oleson

On Saturday, June 9, there was an informal gathering of some of Tryggvi's personal friends, in the Swedish Male Voice Choir club rooms, to congratulate him on winning these awards and to wish him well on his journey to Europe and his sojourn at Harvard. This gathering was not representative of any society or organization, but consisted of some thirty personal friends who have valued his friendship through the years. There were family friends, who remembered Tryggvi as a young boy; schoolboy chums from elementary and high school days; old cronies from undergraduate days; men who have worked with him in various organizations; and university professors. These men, representing all walks of life, were evidence that Tryggvi has not secluded himself in his studies, but has found time to establish varied and enduring friendships.

The master of ceremonies for the occasion was J. G. Johannsson, who has an inimitable faculty of making

everyone feel at ease. The speaker of the evening was Judge W. J. Lindal. Judge Lindal combined his serious observations with light humor in a particularly happy way. He emphasized the fact that the historian must be diligent, painstaking, and discerning: diligent in searching for material; painstaking in leaving out nothing that is relevant; and discerning in weighing the evidence. He also pointed out that these awards were given to

men who strove for them, not to those who hid their talents under a bushel. On behalf of the gathering, H. Thorgrimsson presented the guest with airplane luggage. Many of those present spoke briefly, extending their congratulations to the guest of honor and his family on gaining such recognition.

Dr. Oleson has brought credit to this province and university. All members of the community join in wishing him future success. —J. H. Jonasson

THE BETEL HOME PLAN

Federal and Provincial Housing Plans for the Aged

by GEORGE JOHNSON, M.D.

Housing for the aged has become a subject of much discussion, planning and action in recent years. Government assistance has promoted building of low-cost housing units in many communities. Buildings have been converted into homes for the aged as well as additions to present homes and nursing homes.

Because of the "Betel Campaign" for building funds it is felt that a thorough explanation of the different plans should be given to avoid any confusion. Housing for the aged and a home for the aged are two separate and distinct types of service. A community considering "housing for the aged" should consider its disadvantages as well as its advantages.

A community may borrow from the Federal Government 90% of the cost and receive 10% from the Provincial Government to build low-cost housing units. The cost of each unit is approximately \$5,000.00 and such a unit provides a sitting room, a bedroom and kitchenette for two people. Rent is estimated at \$26.00. This allows

about \$54.00 per month for sustenance of two pensioners. Such housing is excellent for an aged couple able to be active, to cook and take an interest in community affairs.

With separate housing units an acute problem arises if one resident becomes ill and has to receive hospital care at \$8.00 per day at community expense. Also, if one partner should die the survivor, if on a government pension only, will have less than \$20.00 for sustenance. Should the husband survive he may not be able to cook. It is difficult to move such a tenant.

The system may become costly to a town as older residents usually develop chronic ailments needing prolonged institutional care. Such housing units would be excellent if aged residents could be moved to a centrally located nursing home for care not acute enough for hospitalization. The government feels that charitable institutions are best able to meet the many personal and individual problems of care of the aged and infirm.

To convert a home or other build-

ings into a home for the aged presents many problems to a municipality such as acquiring suitable staff and additional finances. In one Manitoba town a hospital was converted for such use. The individual rates are \$3.00 a day, with nursing care, and \$4.50 a day for bedridden patients, but without medical attention. For the average pensioner such costs are prohibitive without charitable assistance or town welfare expense, as few can afford to pay \$90.00 per month.

The "Betel Plan" for assisting the aged has been in operation for forty years. Betel is primarily a charitable institution and because of donations and bequests extending over the years will continue to function. In the past all conceivable problems have arisen and the proposed plans are designed to meet those situations.

Betel is at present able to board and room a resident at an average cost of \$56.00 a month. This is \$18.00 below any comparable institution in Canada. The cost above a resident's pension is met by Betel in most cases.

Betel desires to follow the modern idea of keeping the aged residents on their own as long as possible. However, as residents now come to the home at a greater age than before, the average being 86, a diverse plan is necessary.

The "Betel Plan" is to have the present home remodelled to provide a large central recreation room or social

centre on the main floor. The dining room will be on this floor. A large infirmary will be on the second floor for the very ill and disabled with constant nursing care. The new wing of fifty fireproof rooms will be for active residents. Each of these rooms will be large enough for two in order to keep married couples together. The ultimate plan is to have some low-cost housing units on the Betel property where the younger and more vigorous can be together "on their own". Any such resident becoming single moves into the main building.

The "Betel Plan" therefore provides a complete program of care for the aged, where security is offered within the income of the average pensioner, as well as companionship in a larger community group.

This explanation of the "Betel Plan" is given to show the necessity to complete the project. The appeal for money to build is based on an urgent need to help the deserving aged in our Icelandic community. Betel has become an institution of good repute in its forty years and it must now be improved for its future work. As every community is represented at Betel, we must call on all communities to assist us in this work.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED
N-O-W
DURING THIS BUILDING
CAMPAIGN



BOOK REVIEWS

Great Adventures and Explorations,
edited by Vilhjalmur Stefansson
The Dail Press, New York, 1947. pp. 778

Great Adventures and Explorations is an appropriate title for Vilhjalmur Stefansson's very interesting and comprehensive account of world exploration. From its starting point in the Mediterranean some 30,000 to 40,000 years ago, the narrative proceeds with the discovery by members of Western civilization of one region after another until the map of the globe is filled in.

Stefansson is an excellent narrator. The global point of view is maintained throughout. From the Mediterranean as a starting point, in very early times, we proceed with the explorers to the regions of North-Western Europe, as far as the ice-fields of the Arctic; across the equator, dispelling the popular fallacy of a burning uninhabitable zone around the equator; on a voyage around the globe; to carve out the continents; to probe our way through the North-West and the North-East passages, and conquer the two Ice-caps of the world.

This is a comprehensive but a not thinly spread account. The details selected are significant and they give a clear and realistic picture. Extensive use of first-hand accounts, well edited, gives the reader a sense of participation. Pictures of the scene, land and people; sights, sounds, and smells, make for realism. Through the eyes of Pytheas we behold the sea lung of the Arctic and "the evershining fire (that) spreads out through day and night;" with Orellana we travel 1800 leagues down the Amazon and with Mackenzie on his toilsome and dangerous journey across the Rocky Moun-

tains. There are compelling and at times moving accounts of courage, determination and perseverance, and hardihood, of human endurance pushed to the limit, and of gambling with death. We look forward to the events unfolding, not backward on the accomplished feat.

Scholarly evaluation of the evidence is apparent and one has the feeling that the picture is as true as it is ever likely to be.

The great explorers of all time appear in perspective. Pytheas, who ventured north to Iceland and to the ice-pack one hundred miles beyond, about 330 B.C., "has been emerging in the last decades as a towering figure both in exploration and philosophy". The voyage of Magellan's ship around the world is indeed generally well known as one of the most remarkable feats of exploration, but not so well known is the stature, as man and explorer, of James Cook, whose exploits are generally glimpsed in disjointed fashion through the reading of history texts. His great skill, scientific approach, breadth of vision, scrupulous honesty, and sympathetic attitude towards the natives are likely to come as a revelation to most of us. Greatest of all were Peary and Scott "Peary's is the world's greatest success story of men against the elements; Scott's the noblest."

We follow the development of the science and technique of Arctic exploration, the total lack of which led to the tragedy of Sir John Franklin's expedition and explains the failure of Scott's first gallant attempt at the South Pole.. The early failures were largely due to scurvy, when on all sides there was fresh meat for the tak-

ing. In addition to the game at hand, the pemmican of the Canadian North-West becomes the explorers' basic concentrated ration. There is a revolution in clothing and means of transport. Peary and Amundsen illustrate graphically this development, as did Stefansson himself, although he does not mention it.

There are numerous glimpses of the history of peoples and countries, including the pre-historic Norse, King Arthur's conquest of Iceland, a great northern "empire", long before the time of Canute, the deep sea voyages of the Irish and their knowledge of Iceland in the sixth century, the Greenland settlement, and Magnus Eriksson's plan, about 1547, to bring Russia into the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. There is an illuminating study of the fate of the Greenland colony and a sweep of Dutch history reveals the impelling motive of these sturdy people in their extensive exploration.

Those who read the Icelandic sagas in the original are on familiar ground when they come to a direct translation from the saga of Erik the Red, parts that tell of the landing of Leif the Lucky on the shores of Vinland, the land of self-sown wheat and wine berries and the maple tree, and of the attempt at colonization by Thorfinn Karlsefni. But, whether in the original or in translation, the story is of never failing interest. For those who have not the benefit of the original, here is an excellent translation.

Of special interest to Canadians is the story told briefly but in good perspective of the rivalry of the Hudson Bay and North-West Companies. Also, in the account of the exploration of the North-West passage there emerges the figure of Thomas Simpson, nephew of Sir George Simpson, whose journey

of 1836 is referred to as one of the great feats in the history of discovery.

There is a story remembered by your reviewer from his childhood days, of two tiny children who set out to find the end of the world. It is called "The Journey to the World's End." Stefansson's book closes with a dramatic and deeply moving account of Antarctic exploration and the discovery of the South Pole. Explorers had finally reached the "world's end."

Great Adventures and Explorations is the work of a craftsman. The concept of a single history of world exploration from the earliest times is in itself imaginative and the numerous threads of narration are woven into one coherent whole. In his writing and editing Stefansson is master of economy. The personages whom we encounter, explorers and native people alike, are alive and very human. This is an extremely interesting and at times a fascinating account of world exploration by one who himself is recognized as one of the great explorers of all time. —W. K.

★

IN DAYS GONE BY

by Rannveig K. G. Sigbjornsson
Arthur H. Stackwell Ltd.,
Devon, England, Publishers.

This little book is a translation of five stories, written in Icelandic, three translated by the author herself, one by the late Professor Skuli Johnson and one by Johanna F. Sigbjornsson.

The first story entitled **THE GIFT** is really told in the first four words, "God, I am hungry." It is a true story and relates an event which happened in Iceland at Christmas time over a century ago. The man, who, when a boy, suffered the hunger, told the story to the author and she has written it in very realistic language. One can almost feel the child's hunger. The story combines the resourcefulness even of

a child who is afraid there may be no food in the home, with the faith of the mother that her prayer will be answered and food brought to her. The boy roasts the bones of the head of a codfish served that day, in case there be nothing else there on Christmas Eve. The mother persuades the father not to kill one of the few sheep they had; she has faith that her prayer will be answered. Next day a whale was washed ashore.

In *THE MORNING OF LIGHT* the author gives her interpretation of the biblical event when the Lord sent Adam and Eve forth from the Garden of Eden. The author has Adam ask Eve as they left: "What was it the Lord whispered in your ear inside the garden gate?" She gives the answer at the end of the story: "I love you better than life itself. That was the Gift the Lord gave me within the Garden Gate."

IN THE VIOLET GLEAMS was translated by Professor Johnson.

A beautiful young girl had feared the elves in her childhood days but when she became sixteen "a fear of reality" filled her mind. Could it possibly be true that her "poor poverty stricken mother" could bring herself to want Thordis to marry a weli to do widower of forty-five to rid them of their dire poverty — — a man "swollen of face, red-eyed, short and thick-set, with a sizeable paunch who drank considerably." "It could not be" she cried but it turned out to be and she promised to marry him. A short time before the marriage she prayed: "Take me now, Father, into your embrace and show to me your eternal love."

During the following weeks a cough she had contracted "made fearful progress over her body." Before the month passed she "had come into her coffin."

ONE DAY'S JOURNEY is a story from the author's childhood, beauti-

fully told. "It was," as she herself says in the preface "very definitely a one day's journey."

"*THE SAGE AT THE OLD FARM*", translated by Johanna F. Sigbjornsson relates an old story often told but seldom in such powerful language. It is the story of those of wealth and prestige who show hospitality but with sharp discrimination. Among the select visitors to the "Ford", the wealthiest home in that district, was the local clergyman.

A niece of the lady of the house gave birth to a child whose acknowledged father was an employee of the lord of the Ford. The master decided to employ him no longer.

"The bed clothes of the Ford, were, like everything else there—the best. To let the helpless little one spoil them—that could not be permitted."

The little one — the Guest — was placed upon a "bundle of hay in the empty extra bed." The Guest died.

Some years later the once wealthy Ford home and everything on the farm had to be sold. An old woman "almost pathetic in appearance" begged to be allowed to see the mistress of the house. In the brief conversation she inquired about the "Little Guest." "That is a long time ago" the mistress said indifferently, wishing to change the conversation. As the old woman turned to go she "shook her gnarled finger in her face and almost hissed the words through broken teeth and scarred lips.

"It is in vain to house the clergyman if the door is barred against the Lord himself!"

These stories are gems, yet powerful, tender yet cutting; they have to be read to be appreciated. If the author has any more she should share them.

W. J. L.

IN THE NEWS

WINS PRAISE AT WINNIPEG MUSIC FESTIVAL

A talented young pianist, **Lynn Olson**, won high praise and a trophy at the musical festival held in Winnipeg in April. Following are the reports of the Winnipeg daily papers:

Her Sultry Technique Made Trophy a Must

First of the musical festival's major trophies Wednesday went to a young girl with a versatile technique at the piano.

She was Lynn Olson, a sixth grader, who won the Swedish Musical Club trophy for junior instrumentalists.

Lynn played Novelette and Scherzo, by Kabalevsky, and The Moon, by Felix Swinstead. "She gave a very versatile and competent performance in all three pieces," said adjudicator Leon Forrester, "and so she must win the trophy."

The novelette had the right heavy, sultry and sulky atmosphere, said Mr. Forrester. "She had a story to tell and she made it engrossing to us.

"It sparkled, was always alive, and beautifully poised like an acrobat," Mr. Forrester said of the scherzo.

—Winnipeg Tribune.

Very Versatile

In awarding the Swedish Musical trophy to Lynn Olson, Dr. Forrester said she was "a very versatile performer who played equally well in three very different pieces." Lynn played Kabalevsky's Novelette and Scherzo and Swinstead's The Moon. The Novelette had the right "heavy sultry atmosphere of the Russian barcarolle," and there was a wealth of expression. The

scherzo was "beautifully poised — like an acrobat." —Winnipeg Free Press, April 19.

She was invited to play at the final concert sponsored by the Winnipeg Men's Musical Club. "A fine mood was set by her performance of The Moon, by Felix Swinstead".

Lynn is 13 years old, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Olafur J. Olson of Winnipeg.

★

A PROMISE FULFILLED

A promise of seven years ago was fulfilled last summer for 14-year-old **Bruce Davidson**, of Buffalo, N. Y. when he made a visit to Iceland as the guest of Friðrik Joelsson, of Hafnarfjörður. Joelsson, a printer spent two years in Buffalo, where the loneliness of strange surroundings was relieved by the hospitality of Bruce's aunt and foster-mother, Mrs. Elsie D. Heiggard. When he returned home in 1949, he promised Bruce that he would send for him to visit Iceland when he became 14.

During his visit Bruce made a 4000 mile trip by jeep through Iceland, visiting Thingvellir, among other places of interest. Joelsson also took the boy for a week-long cruise around the island. From the boat they saw the rugged mountainous shore with tiny fishing villages, and stopped to visit several towns on the northern coast where Bruce's grandparents were born.

Several other men who had studied in Buffalo were on hand to help entertain the boy. Karl Eriksson, who attended Burgard Vocational High School in Buffalo to study flying, took a group over the island by air, and others invited the boy to their homes.

Bruce found little difficulty in making himself understood. When his meager Icelandic vocabulary failed him, he reverted to English and most of the Icelanders were able to understand him. In his enthusiasm over the trip, Bruce has already started saving up for a return visit, when he intends to take his mother and sister along.

★

LEADING LYRIC POET OF REYKJAVIK VISITS WINNIPEG



Tómas Guðmundsson

The famed lyric poet, Tómas Guðmundsson of Reykjavik, Iceland, paid a short visit to his kinsmen in Winnipeg on May 31. He appeared that evening in the Federated Church, under the auspices of the Icelandic National League and recited some of his most beautiful lyrics from his latest volume, *Fljótið helga* (The Holy River), besides bringing greetings from his homeland. The author was warmly received, not only because of his beautiful poems but also on account of his

charming personality. — This poet was featured in the autumn 1955 issue of this magazine.—

For several weeks Mr. Guðmundsson had travelled widely throughout the United States as a guest of the State Department. He was accompanied by the reverend Jón Thorvarðsson of Reykjavik, Iceland.

★

CHOIR DIRECTOR AND SOLOIST

A spirited and vivacious presentation of light and classical music captivated the audience when Mrs. Roland (Margaret) Decosse directed a chorus of 36 mixed voices in a concert at St. Paul, Alberta. Mrs. Decosse, who will be remembered by Winnipeggers for her concert appearances here, herself performed as soloist and chose as her first number an Icelandic song, "Svanasöngur á heiði". Items on the program included piano renditions, solos, quartet harmony, vocal duets, instrumental pieces, pantomime, square dances and chorus harmonization in five languages. Mrs. Decosse, a native of Hecla Island on Lake Winnipeg, is the daughter of Stefan Helgason and the late Stefania Helgason.

★

"IN THE ROUGH WITH RUTH"

This is a name of a column appearing regularly in the Winnipeg Free Press. The articles, dealing mostly with women's golf in Winnipeg and the province, are written by Miss Ruth Thorvaldson. She is well qualified to report on golf and other sports for she is one of Manitoba's outstanding young women golfers.

A member of the St Charles Country Club, Ruth was Manitoba junior girls' champion in 1952. That same year she captured the provincial handicap crown and the Clear Lake tourna-

ment and was a member of the Manitoba team which played in the Canadian ladies championships at Edmonton. In 1953 she again qualified for the team, competing in the national event at London, Ont. In 1954 she won a spot on the senior team and thus earned a trip to Dartmouth, N. S.

Miss Thorvaldson is a 1954 graduate in Arts from the University of Manitoba. Her column is well written, informative, and interesting even to those who are not well versed in the game of golf.

★

TH. W. THORDARSON HONORED

Concordia College at Moorhead, Minnesota, recently awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree to **Th. W. Thordarson**, of Fargo, N. D. Mr. Thordarson is state director of the Division of Supervised Study for North Dakota,

and served ten years on the faculty of the North Dakota State College. In 1935 he organized the Division of Supervised Study under a state appropriation, which has enabled sixty thousand students, most of them from rural communities, to study high school courses by correspondence. One thousand home-town teachers have served as supervisors under Mr. Thordarson's guidance. Mr. Thordarson holds the Master of Science and Bachelor of Laws degrees.

Dr. Thordarson is leaving this month for Iceland through the joint arrangements between the United States Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Agricultural Society of Iceland.

Thordur Valdimar Thordarson was born at Gardar, North Dakota 1892, son of Ingibjörg Thordarson now 95 years of age, and the late Grímur Þórðarson.

GRADUATES

PRIZE and FELLOWSHIP WINNER

Daniel Peter Snidal, M.D.—Prowse Prize and Medal in clinical Research. Bronze medal and \$250.

Dr. Snidal, who was with the Winnipeg General hospital for eleven years and this last year was doing research work at the Deer Lodge hospital, was awarded a travelling fellowship by the R. Samuel McLaughlin foundation to study for one year at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

His parents are Dr. and Mrs. J. G. Snidal of Winnipeg.

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

Hjalmar Wilfred Johnson (Honors). Parents: Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Johnson, Winnipeg.

Graham Walter Carl Thorkelson, B. Sc. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Carl Thorkelson, Virden, Man.

BACHELOR OF LAWS

Peter Thor Guttormsson, B.A. (Sask.) Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Peter Guttormsson, Watrous, Sask.

BACHELOR OF PEDAGOGY

John Handford Hjalmarson, B.A. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Numi Hjalmarson, Woodlands, Man.

Clarence Thorsteinn Swainson, B.A. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. I. Swainson, Winnipeg, Man.

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Beverley Ann Armstrong. Daughter of Roy A. and Pauline (Sigvaldason) Armstrong, Winnipeg, Man.

Vilborg Kristjana Eyjolfsson, Parents: the late Mr. and Mrs. Gunnsteinn Eyjolfsson of Riverton, Man.

Gilbert Raymond Goodman, Parents: Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Goodman, Winnipeg, Man.

Marilyn Ragna Hurst. Parents: Mr. W. J. and Gyða (Johnson) Hurst.

Jacqueline Johnson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Johnson, Winnipeg.

Norma Olive Johnson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. George E. Johnson, Winnipeg, Man.

Gertrude Edith Hanson B.Sc. (H.E.) Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hanson

Sandra Gail Hart. Won the award for the most outstanding woman graduate, 1956 class; president of Alpha Pi chapter; will attend the sorority's convention at Mackenac, Mich., in July as appointed representative. Daughter of Clifford and Ada (Hermanson) Hart, Winnipeg, Man.

Violet Christine Johnson. Parents: Mrs. J. G. Johnson and the late Mr. Johnson, Winnipeg, Man.

Valdina Olafson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Guðmundur Olafson, Reykjavik, P.O. Manitoba.

Marion Campbell. Daughter of Elgin and Jonina Campbell, Winnipeg, Man.

BACHELOR OF INTERIOR DESIGN

Shirley Jo-Ann Blondal. Parents: Mrs. Gudrun Blondal and the late Dr. Agust Blondal.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Heather Jocelyn Amundson, Parents: the late Mr. and Mrs. Agust Amundson of Selkirk, Man.

Johanna Norma Shirley Johnson Parents: Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Johnson, Regina, Sask.

B.S. IN ENGINEERING (Mechanical)

Dennis Bodvar Sigurdson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Sigurdson, Winnipeg.

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Roy Herbert Ruth, M.A. Parents: Mrs. Guðrún Ruth and the late Mr. Guðjón Ruth, Winnipeg, Man.

DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE

GOLD MEDALIST



Björn Sigurbjörnsson

Björn Sigurbjörnsson, won the University Gold Medal and a scholarship from the Canadian Research Council to complete his course for a Master's degree.

Parents: Sigurbjörn Þorkelsson and frú Unnur Haraldsdóttir, Reykjavík, Iceland. His wife, frú Helga Pálsdóttir has been on the staff of the University Library, for the past four years cataloguing the Icelandic books.

Herbert Leslie Kernested, son of Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Kernested, The Narrows, Lake Manitoba.

B. Sc. IN HOME ECONOMICS

Muriel Vivien Eymundson

Erla Joan Helgason. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Chris Helgason, Baldur, Man.

Lois Evelyn Stefansson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Arni Stefansson, Tyndal, Man.

CERTIFICATE IN NURSING EDUCATION

Emily Kristine Einarson (Teaching and supervision in schools of Nursing) Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gudbrandur Einarson, Glenboro, Man.

Wilma Florence Hokanson (Public Health Nursing)

DIPLOMA IN DAIRYING

Richard Lorne Thomas Bjornson.

UNIVERSITY of SASKATCHEWAN BACHELOR OF ARTS

Enid Ellen Delgatty. Holder of a four-year Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co. scholarship. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Delgatty of Flin Flon. Granddaughter of Mr. Thorvaldson of Piney, Manitoba.

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

Morley Edward Arnason, B.A. Won Dept. of Co-operation Essay Prize (First). Son of Dr. and Mrs. B. N. Arnason, Regina, Sask.

B.Sc. in ENGINEERING (Mechanical)

Edward Sigurd Jonasson, Wynyard, Sask.

Glen Thomas Narfason, Foam Lake, Sask.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Awarded the Athlone Fellowship

David Kristmanson, attended the University of B. C. on a \$2,000 Imperial Oil Co. Scholarship, graduating in 1953. Since then he has been

employed by the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Corp. at Trail and Kimberley, B. C. He has now been awarded the Athlone Fellowship for two years' study in London, England—one year at the Imperial College and one year in industry.

His brother, Lawrence Kristmanson, who graduated from the Vancouver School of Art this spring also won a scholarship. These brothers are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Kristmanson of Prince Rupert, B. C.

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

Gerald Johann Philippsson, B.A. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Oli Philippson, Vancouver.

Theodore Thomas Thordarson, B.A. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Thordarson, Vancouver; formerly of Hecla and Selkirk, Manitoba.

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Margret Stefania Bardal, B.Sc (H. Ec.) Manitoba. Thesis: The Married Woman in Employment.

After receiving her Bachelor of Social Work degree at the University of B. C., she joined the Social Service Staff at the University of Des Moines, Iowa, where she was awarded a scholarship to complete her course for the Master's Degree. Parents: Mrs. Margret Bardal of Winnipeg and the late Arinbjörn S. Bardal.

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK

Rosemary Selma Alden, B.A. — Her mother is Icelandic: Ólöf Sigurdson Alden of Vancouver.

BACHELOR OF ARTS

June Margaret Nylander. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Otto Nylander, Vancouver. Her mother is Icelandic: Gudrun Sigurdson Nylander.

Clive Nylander, their son, graduated

in Law last year and was admitted to the bar this spring.

Beverley Anne Palson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Palson, Vancouver.

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Gilbert Sigurdson: Robert Alexander Cunningham Memorial Scholarship (for highest standing in Chemistry of the first year — \$25.00.



Eleanor Johannson: Cora Hind Bursary in Home Economics (First year) — \$100.00; Kiwanis Club Bursary in Home Economics (First year) — \$100.

Her parents are Thorkell and Gudrun (Sigvaldason) Johannsson of Arborg, Man. Won several awards as a member of the Manitoba 4-H club — see Icel. Can. Autumn and Winter issues 1954.

Frank Sigurdson: Manitoba Association of Architects Prize — \$22.50 in books; J. G. Fraser Ltd., Summer Sketching Prize — \$5.00.

UNIVERSITY OF MCGILL Doctor of Medicine



Carmelle Thorfinsson

Carmelle Thorfinsson, B.A. daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Thorfinsson, Wynyard, Sask. Received her elementary and high school education at Elfros and Wynyard, Sask. Enrolled in the pre-medical course at the University of Saskatchewan in 1950; received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1954. Completed her medical course at McGill in May this year, the youngest in her class of 107 students, she is only 23 years old. During her high school and university years she took part in dramatics and won an award — was also member of the debating teams and school choirs.

WINS GOVERNOR GENERAL'S MEDAL

At the graduation exercises at the Gimli High School, Mr. R. R. Robertson of the Department of Education presented the Governor General's medal to Shirley Thorsteinson, a grade

twelve student, in recognition of her all-round proficiency in academic work and general interest in school affairs. Shirley is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Thorsteinson of Husavik, Man. She attended Kjarna school at Husavik, enrolling in the Gimli High School last fall.

GRADUATES IN NURSING Winnipeg General Hospital

Velma Jean Skagfjord. Received the Nursing Faculty Winnipeg General Hospital award for outstanding school citizenship. Parents: Mr. and Mrs.

Bjarni Skagfeld, Selkirk, Man.

Shirley Doreen Sigurdson

Svafa Lois Johnson

Miserecordia Hospital

June Valdheidur Stadfeld. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Eidur Stadfeld, Hodgson, Manitoba.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Bachelor of Science in Medicine

Jón Valdimar Eylands, B.A. Jón will attend the McGill University for the next two years to complete his course in medicine.

NEWS SUMMARY

Jack Sigvaldason, of the Winnipeg Free Press won the Women's Advertising club of Winnipeg award for high marks in the special advertising course held at the Evening Institute of the University of Manitoba. The presentation took place in May at the club's luncheon meeting at the Fort Garry Hotel.

★

The thirty-seventh annual convention of the Winnipeg Women's Institute was held at Riverton on May 22. Mrs. C. Dahlman welcomed the delegates. Mrs. Stanley Price, president, was in the chair. Guest speakers included H. H. Austman from the Department of Agriculture, Dr. S. O. Thompson, M.L.A., who spoke on "Opening of the North Country", Mrs. W. R. Forrester, Miss Evelyn Ames, Miss Mary Matheson and Mrs. Isobell Cook. A banquet convened by the Lutheran Ladies' Aid was held in the evening followed by a fashion parade with Mrs.

L. Olafsson as commentator.

Mrs. G. Wellwood was elected president and Mrs. S. J. Tergesen of Gimli first vice-president.

★

Three law students from Iceland returned home to their studies early in May after a brief "accelerated" course in North American law at the New York University Law Center in New York City.

The future lawyers were at NYU on a student exchange arranged by their government and the American embassy in Iceland. They were Matthias A. Matthiesen, Orn Thor, and Jon G. Tomasson, all of the University of Iceland in Reykjavik. Their two-week visit followed a trip in April to the law school at the University of Iceland by three NYU law students.

In addition to attending classes and seminars at the NYU School of Law, the Iceland students visited federal courts, the Stock Exchange, and Wall

Street law firms in New York City, and spent a weekend in Washington, D.C., observing legal and legislative procedures.

The visitors were impressed by the "different" approach to law education and the practice of law in the United States. They cited compulsory attendance at class in American law schools, the "expense" of law education here, the "tremendous size" of law firms, and the "complicated rules of evidence" in North America. In Iceland, they pointed out, legal education is paid for in large part by the government, attendance at class is voluntary, Iceland's biggest law firm has three lawyers, and there is no jury system for the disposition of cases.

★

Two Icelandic boys received recognition at the conclusion of last winter's hockey season. **Skuli Sigfusson**, of Colson's Comets, was picked by hockey scout Dennis Bell as being representative of Manitoba's juvenile hockey players, and **Paul Reykdal**, of the Sir John Franklin community club, was awarded a trophy for showing the best sportsmanship in his community club league. Skuli is the son of Sveinn Sigfusson, who holds several athletic records. Paul is the son of P. V. Reykdal. Both boys are 13 years of age, and both trace their origin to Lundar, Man., where their grandfather namesakes were prominent pioneers.

★

Mrs. B. Bjarnarson was re-elected president at the thirty-second annual convention of the Lutheran Women's League of Manitoba held June 1, 2, and 3 in Winnipeg. Reports were presented by the 24 organizations of the

League. Sixty-one delegates and officers were in attendance. The Women's Association of St. Stephen's Church, St. James joined the League.

Friends and relatives of **Mrs. Margrét Benedictson** of Blaine, Wash., held an "Open House" in her honor when she attained her 90th birthday on March 16, this year. Mrs. Benedictson was a leader in the suffrage movement in Manitoba, editor of the periodical **Freyja**, and a noted speaker.

★

The production of the play—In the Wake of The Storm—by the Jon Sigurdson Chapter, I.O.D.E. has proved very successful. It was performed seven times—four times in Winnipeg and at Gimli, Lundar and Arborg, before large audiences.

★

Miss Sharon Thorvaldson, student at Gordon Bell high school in Winnipeg was crowned Teen Queen by Mayor George E. Sharpe during a performance at the Teeners' fashion show at Hudson's Bay store in April. She was chosen from the sixteen high school students who were models for the week-long show. Sharon is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Thorvaldson, Winnipeg.

★

Capt. George Johannesson, who for the past fifteen years has been a pilot of passenger aircraft for the Canadian Pacific Airlines in the Western provinces has been promoted to piloting airplanes across the Pacific Ocean to Japan, Hawaii and South America, and will be stationed in Vancouver. He is the son of Mrs. G. Johannesson of Winnipeg and the late George Johannesson.

On Saturday, May 12th, the Icelandic community lost one of its best-loved citizens, **Dr. Sigurður Júlíus Jóhannesson**. An article about him is being written by Dr. S. E. Bjornson and will appear in the Autumn issue of this magazine.

★

The publication "First Flowering", devoted to the writing of Canadian students, has accepted a short story written by Rosemary Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jon Johnson of Winnipeg. Rosemary was 13 years of age when she wrote the story, which was submitted for publication by her teacher at General Wolfe School.

★

Dr. V. J. Eylands president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of North America and **Mrs. Eylands, Rev. Philip M. Petursson**, president of the Western Canada Unitarian Conference and **Mrs. Petursson** received invitations from Steingrímur Steinþórsson, head of the Department of Theology of Iceland and Dr. Ásmundur Guðmundsson, bishop of Iceland, to attend the nine-hundred year anniversary of the Bishopric of Skálholt, which will be celebrated on July 1st. this year.

★

On March 25th at an evening service held in the auditorium of the St. James Collegiate **Dr. V. J. Eylands** formally announced the organization of the St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Silver Heights, as a charter member of the U.L.C.A., Icelandic Synod. **Dr. Donald Houser**, New York, field director of the Board of American Missions gave

the sermon "A Church is Born". Also present and bringing greetings to the new congregation were Pastor S. T. Guttormsson, Cavalir, N. D., Pastor B. R. Friðriksson, Gimli, Man., Pastor Ó. Skúlason, Mountain, North Dakota.

Pastor Eric H. Sigmar, the pastor of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, conducted the service.

★

Dr. Fridrik Kristjansson, who has been for many years with the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, doing reasearch work at the Central Experimental Farm, was appointed representative of his department to attend the International Congress of Animal Husbandry held in Madrid, Spain, in May, and the International Congress of Animal Breeding held in Cambridge, England in June. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Kristjansson of Winnipeg.

★

The well-known poet **Jón Jónatansson** attained his eightieth birthday on June 1 this year. Born at Bæ in Skagafjörður he came to Canada at the turn of the century. His poems have appeared in the Icelandic weeklies.

★

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of the Women's Association of the First Icelandic Lutheran Church in Winnipeg was observed at a banquet meeting in January, presided over by the president, Mrs. Paul Sigurdson. Mrs. G. Johannesson, principal speaker, gave an outline of the origin and history of the association.

IDYLLS

by SHIRLEY WARD

DAWN

The eastern sky is a wash of pastel tints, rose shading into lavender, streaked with gold. Tree tops lay dark fingers against the soft color. Purple martins, robins, woodpeckers flit about, touches of color in the quiet sky. Slowly the sun rises above the horizon, its rays shedding lustre on all earthly things, and bestowing a blessing on the new day.

NOON

A meadow steeped in warm sunshine and the slumberous scent of mown hay; a horizon shimmering in a maze of heat waves, like continual ripples sent along a rope held in one's hand. Drowsiness holds all things in its spell: the voiceless birds, the aimless insects, horse and man resting from their labors in the shadow of motionless trees.

DUSK

The sun has set, and a faint flush on the horizon is all that remains to mark the splendor of its departure. Twilight comes over the land, a shadowy presence bringing stillness and contentment. Only the muted, soothing chant of myriad frogs blends into the tranquillity.

NIGHT

Night creeps over the land, a sheltering presence comes to give rest to all creatures. Clothed in a mantle of black, stars in her hair and the sickle moon a wand in her hand, she hushes the earth; stills the toil of man and beast, looses the tongues of her small choristers that they may make sweet the darkness with her praise.

MOONLIGHT ON THE LAKE

Silver rays transform the expanse of water into shimmering metal; its molten surface ripples as a gypsy breeze skims lightly across on twinkling feet. A canoe floats unguided, a clear voice is raised in song, the muted chord of a guitar come softly across the water.

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